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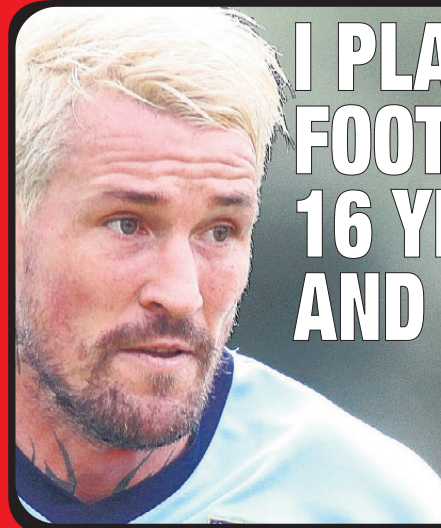
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## LUCKY LEVELLER KEEPS PLAY-OFF HOPES ALIVE

Yeovil v Bournemouth match report – see page 5



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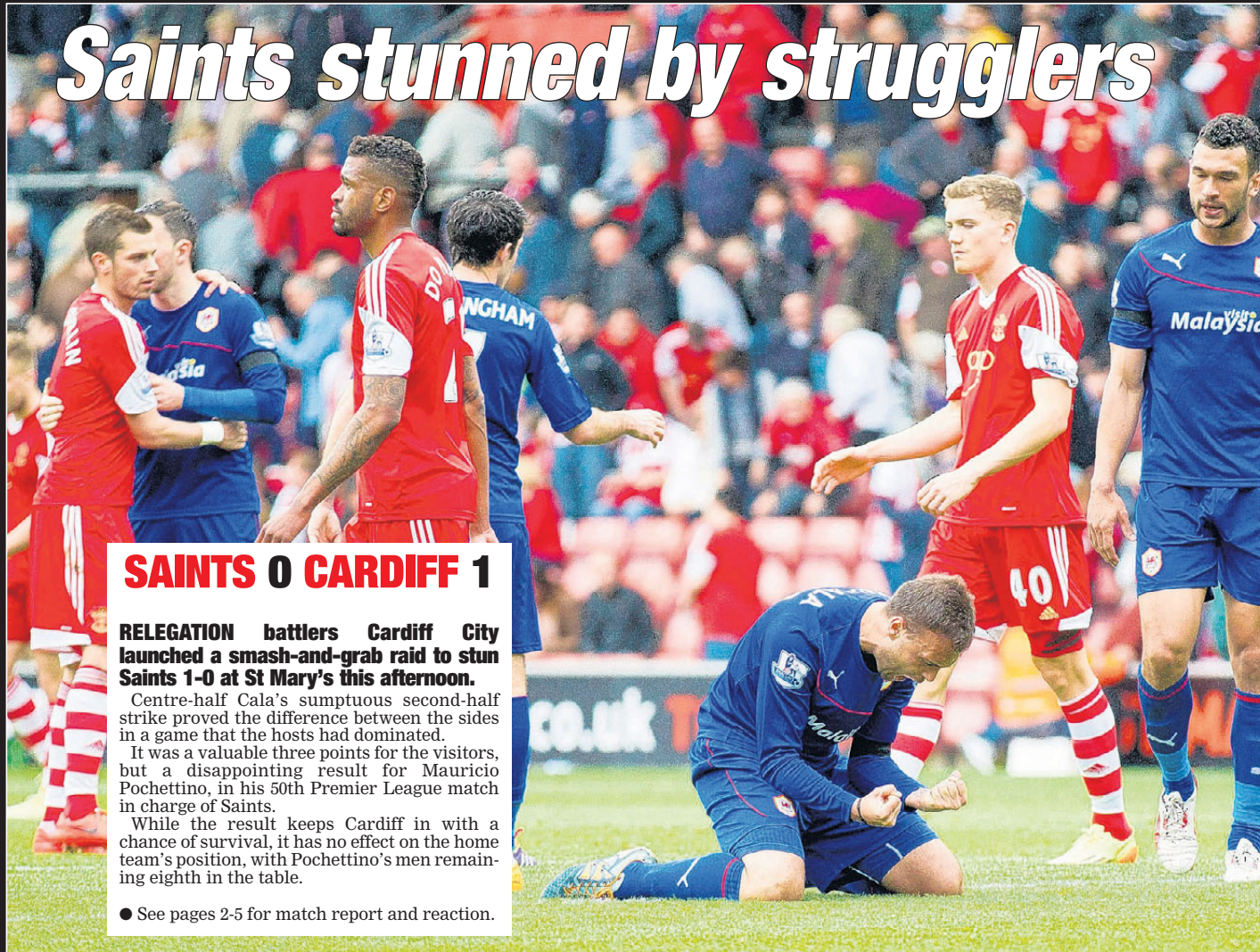


**I PLAYED PRO  
FOOTBALL FOR  
16 YEARS  
AND HATED IT**

**LEE PEACOCK  
BIG INTERVIEW**  
– see pages 18-21

# SMASH 'N' GRAB

## Saints stunned by strugglers



### SAINTS 0 CARDIFF 1

**RELEGATION** battlers Cardiff City launched a smash-and-grab raid to stun Saints 1-0 at St Mary's this afternoon.

Centre-half Cala's sumptuous second-half strike proved the difference between the sides in a game that the hosts had dominated.

It was a valuable three points for the visitors, but a disappointing result for Mauricio Pochettino, in his 50th Premier League match in charge of Saints.

While the result keeps Cardiff in with a chance of survival, it has no effect on the home team's position, with Pochettino's men remaining eighth in the table.

● See pages 2-5 for match report and reaction.

### TERRY PAINE



Saints legend's  
**EXCLUSIVE** column  
See pages 6-7

### NON-LEAGUE



Four-page special on  
Sholing's Vase heroes  
See pages 23-26

### AWARDS



Hampshire & IOW  
Sports Awards  
See pages 38-43

### CRICKET



Abbott ready to fire  
for Hampshire  
See pages 44-45

**AGONY AND THE ECSTASY:** Cardiff City's goal scorer Juan Cala (floor) drops to his knees on the final whistle while Saints players look on.

**£50,000 TO BE WON WITH FIND THE BALL – SEE PAGE 10**



# Saints Spotlight

## SAINTS 0 CARDIFF CITY 1: POCH BRINGS

# DOMINANT SAINTS CITY'S SMASH 'N'



**BLOCKED OFF:** Adam Lallana.

**RELEGATION** battlers Cardiff City launched a smash-and-grab raid to stun Saints 1-0 at St Mary's this afternoon.

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While the result keeps Cardiff in with a chance of survival, it has no effect on the home team's position, with Pochettino's men remaining eighth in the table.

The day began with the Saints players emerging for their pre-match warm-ups wearing training tops with the number nine on the back, as a show of support for their injured teammate, Jay Rodriguez.

The forward, a week on from suffering a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee, was in the stands for this



**TUSSLE:** Jose Fonte and Frazier Campbell battle for the ball.

### Gordon Simpson

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**SPORTS REPORTER**



afternoon's game.

Kick-off was seven minutes later than normal, a move replicated across the country to mark the 25th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster.

Despite a racket from a small group of Cardiff fans during the first few seconds, the rest was respectfully observed.

The early stages of the game saw little in the way of opportunities for either side.

Saints did threaten in the third minute, but Luke Shaw's low cross, after Adam Lallana's pass picked out his overlapping run, was well cleared by Cala before Steven Davis could convert from close range.

Davis threatened again in the 14th minute, after being slipped in down the right side by Lallana, but his angled shot deflected off Fabio and drifted

wide of the far post.

Paulo Gazzaniga was forced into action shortly afterwards, punching away a Peter Whittingham free-kick at his near post, after Dejan Lovren had fouled Fraizer Campbell just outside the corner of the area.

Lallana fired straight at David Marshall from 20 yards, following a neat display of footwork that took him away from Jordon Mutch and Gary Medel, before Rickie Lambert headed over a Gastón Ramirez cross at the back post.

Ramirez, in for the injured Jay Rodriguez, came closest to opening the scoring midway through the half.

Lallana found him in space on the left side of the box, with the Uruguayan's fierce left-foot shot taking a slight deflection



off Steven Caulker and slamming against the bar.

Saints were then denied by Cardiff keeper David Marshall, who made a diving stop to keep out Lambert's 20-yard free-kick after Cala was judged to have fouled Lallana.

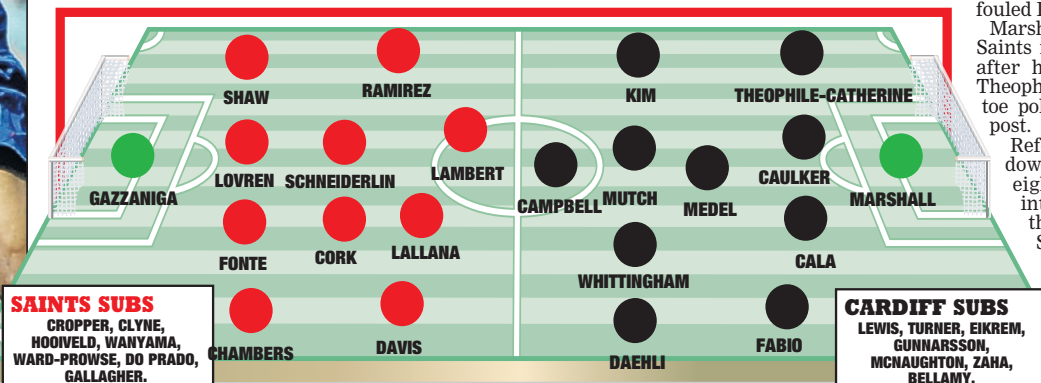
Marshall again kept out the Saints forward moments later, after he muscled past Kevin Theophile-Catherine and sent a toe poke in towards the near post.

Referee Jon Moss turned down appeals for a penalty eight minutes before the interval, after shouts from the home side that Luke Shaw's cross had hit the arm of Caulker.

Despite Saints' dominance, a breakthrough did not arrive before half-time, with the sides going in level.

Neither manager made a change at the break. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the pattern of the game continued as it had done earlier, with the bulk of the play taking place in Cardiff's half.

Saints were struggling to carve out any chances, though, other than the occasional long-



MAURICIO Pochettino made just one change from the team that lost 4-1 to Manchester City last weekend.

Jay Rodriguez began an absence of about six months after suffering a ruptured anterior cruciate liga-

### TEAM NEWS

ment in the defeat at the Etihad Stadium.

In his place came Gastón Ramirez, who had recovered sufficiently from an ankle injury to start.

Paulo Gazzaniga continued in goal, with Artur Boruc still ruled out with a back injury.

Cardiff manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer made four changes from the side that lost 3-0 at home to Crystal Palace last weekend.

## SAINTS v CARDIFF REACTION IN MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO



# Saints Spotlight

## UP SAINTS MILESTONE BUT HAS LITTLE TO CELEBRATE

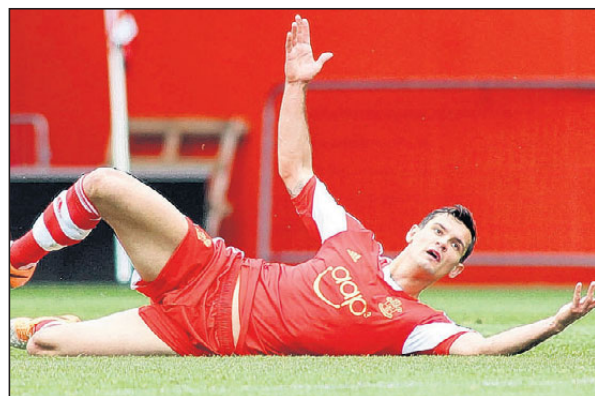
# STUNNED BY GRAB RAID



**LEFT:** Steven Davis tries to keep Cardiff at arm's length.

**RIGHT:** Jack Cork makes a point.

**BELOW:** Dejan Lovren reacts after being brought down.



Daily Echo pictures by Stuart Martin

range shot, as their opponents put plenty of men behind the ball.

Cardiff did launch a rare venture forward on the hour mark, however, resulting in Jordon Mutch driving into space 25 yards out and unleashing a well-struck right-foot shot that Gazzaniga did well to parry.

A minute later, Saints went close, with Lambert's glancing header from Calum Chambers' right-wing cross fizzing just over the bar.

Ramírez should have done better when he broke in behind

the Cardiff defence to latch on to Jack Cork's magnificent chipped pass.

However, with his back to goal, Ramírez got himself in a tangle and fell over as he tried to control the ball.

Having kept it tight for two-thirds of the match, Cardiff boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer decided to become more adventurous as he sought a desperately-needed three points, taking off defensive midfielder Medel and replacing him with Wilfried Zaha.

Moments later, the visitors

took a shock lead.

Saints failed to properly clear a free-kick into their area, with the ball falling to centre-half Cala just outside the box.

The Spaniard took a touch to move it into space, before unleashing a beautiful left-foot strike across goal that beat a full-stretch Gazzaniga and nestled just inside the far post.

Pochettino responded by making his first changes of the day, bringing off Ramírez and replacing him with Sam Gallagher, while also sending on Nathaniel Clyne in place of Chambers.

Cardiff's lead helped create some extra space on the counter attack for the visitors, and, with the pace of Zaha added to the mix, they began to pose a greater threat.

With 15 minutes remaining, the on-loan Manchester United player broke forward and found Campbell, but his shot from 20 yards sliced wide of the top corner.

Saints then nearly levelled when Schneiderlin's stunning chipped pass found the run of Gallagher, but Marshall made a

superb save to deny his first-time shot as the ball dropped out of the air.

Kevin McNaughton then replaced Fabio for Cardiff, while Guly do Prado was sent on in place of Jack Cork for the hosts.

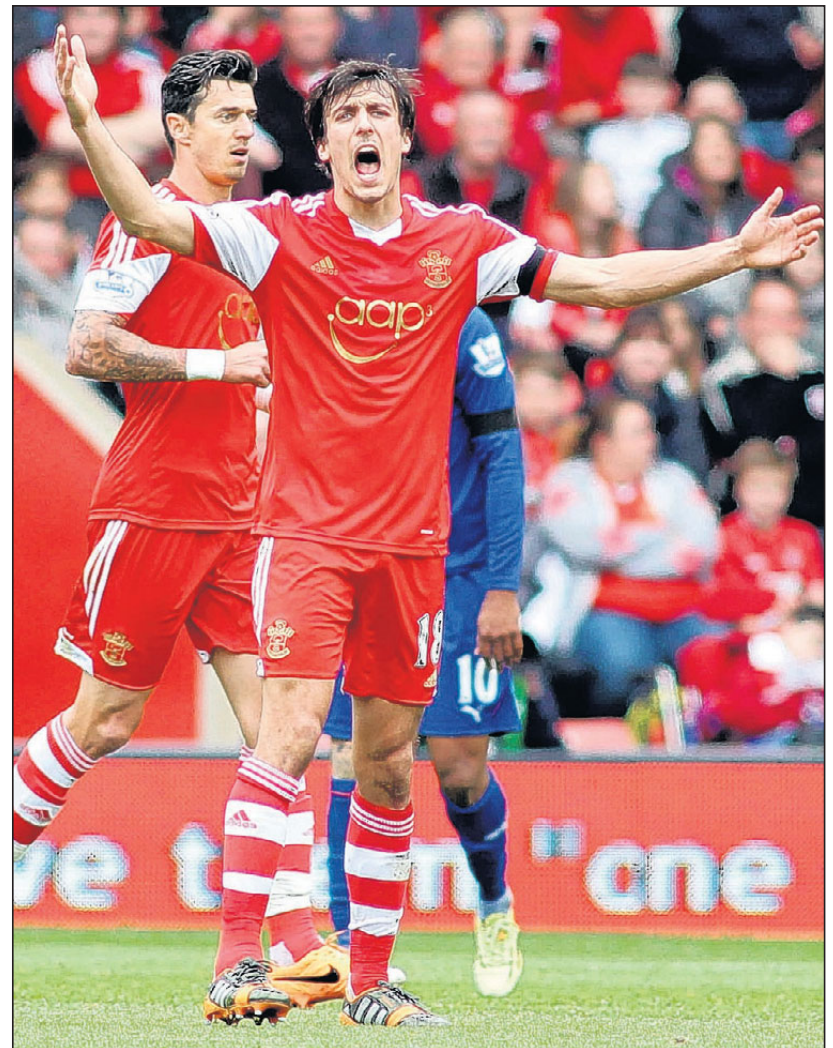
Cardiff were again indebted to Marshall, this time in the 82nd minute, as he flung himself low to the left to keep out Clyne's fierce left-footed drive from 18 yards.

Solskjaer made his final change four minutes from time, taking off Mats Moller Daehli and throwing on Craig Bellamy.

Lambert missed a good chance to level when a Davis corner was flicked on to him at the back post by Schneiderlin, but he got in a muddle and bundled the ball wide.

Zaha could have sealed the game when he led a Cardiff counter, bursting into the area between José Fonte and Lovren, only to be denied by Gazzaniga one-on-one.

The miss did not prove crucial, though, as the visitors hung on for what could be a vital victory.



**BEST FOOT FORWARD:** Calum Chambers and Cardiff's Kim Bo-Kyung.

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## READ THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH ON PAGE 6



# Saints Spotlight



## We lacked cutting edge, says Poch

MAURICIO Pochettino said his Saints side lacked a cutting edge in their 1-0 defeat against Cardiff today.

Despite dominating the contest at St Mary's, the hosts fell to a stunning second-half strike from the visitors' centre-half, Cala.

Pochettino, above, was pleased with how his team controlled the game, but frustrated they couldn't turn that performance into goals.

"We created many chances, but we lacked a clinical edge that we actually needed to win the game," he said.

"I think it was the easiest game we've had in terms of possession.

"We had loads of possession, long spells of possession, but in the end it's a steep learning curve when you realise that all that possession is useless when you don't score a goal and that's what we learned.

Pochettino added that David Marshall's heroics in the Cardiff goal were also a key factor in the result.

"There were many spells where we were controlling the game, we had long spells of possession, their keeper made three or four brilliant saves that actually had a big factor in the game," he said.

"I think, overall, it's a game that we deserved a lot more that, if you analyse, we should have won, but in the end it wasn't to be for us."

# SAINTS MISS THE



**HURDLE:** Jack Cork evades the challenge of Gary Medel.

Daily Echo pictures by Stuart Martin

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## Saints Spotlight

## J-ROD X-FACTOR

Simon Walter

simon.walter@dailyecho.co.uk

**IT WAS not just the victims of Hillsborough that were remembered at St Mary's today.**

Jay Rodriguez was conspicuous by his absence.

Like most of the Saints squad, Rodriguez was not even born when the tragic events of April 15, 1989 unfolded during the FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest.

But the cruel way in which his season – and his World Cup hopes – were ended at Manchester City last week has resulted in an outpouring of sympathy that was continued by his teammates in the pre-match warm-up.

Wearing training tops with Rodriguez's 'No.9' on the back showed just how much they felt for their pal – and they missed him badly for the following 90 minutes.

Rodriguez has provided Saints with the X-factor for much of this season but it was sadly missing as he looked down from the stands.

Saints' top scorer – whose 17-goal haul included two in the 3-0 Boxing Day win at Cardiff – could only watch in frustration as his teammates failed to break down the visitors without him.

It was also difficult not to sympathise with Rickie Lambert, who has enjoyed playing alongside 'J-Rod' for much of this season, but whose afternoon started to go awry when a small contingent among the 2,404 away fans failed to observe the full minute's silence.

## Bad taste

As a proud Liverpoolian, who was a seven-year-old Liverpool fan when the 96 so needlessly lost their lives, that must have left a particularly bad taste.

It was bad enough for everyone else.

No one needs reminding that football has changed irrevocably in the last 25 years.

Pre-Hillsborough, the thought of 30,526 watching an end-of-season Saints home game, all sat in relative comfort, would have seemed ridiculous.

But some things never change and today's encounter was typical end-of-season fare from Saints.

The respective kits matched the colours of those worn by Liverpool and Everton in the 1989 FA Cup final, which was an all-time classic and a fitting tribute to those who so need-



**SAFETY FIRST:** Paulo Gazzaniga punches clear as Cardiff City's Fraizer Campbell (left) leaps in.

lessly lost their lives at Hillsborough.

But this was at the other end of the scale. It was a day to remember others, but a match to forget.

Lambert was involved in the most of Saints' best moments. His eye for a cute pass nearly let Adam Lallana and then Steven Davis in but he should have done better than head Gaston Ramirez's cross over the bar midway through the first half.

He forced a good save from David Marshall with a 25-yard free-kick and, after going past Kevin Theophile-Catherine from

Lallana's pass, his shot was beaten away at the near post.

For all that, it was Ramirez who came closest to scoring, his deflected left-footer coming back off the crossbar from Lallana's pass.

If only Saints had taken one of those chances.

## Failing to convince

With Paulo Gazzaniga failing to convince, punching clear instead of catching on too many occasions, you always felt that a Cardiff side far more desperate

for points would snatch all three points.

And so it proved, with Juan Cala's blockbuster strike giving the visitors all the points.

Substitute Sam Gallagher missed the chance to equalise with a header from Lambert's cross before having a shot saved from close range following some Morgan Schneiderlin brilliance; a succession of stepovers followed by a dink over the top.

Other than that this was a match that will soon be forgotten about, at least by the home fans.



**LEVELLER:** Ryan Fraser, right.

## Fraser to the rescue

RYAN Fraser's fortuitous second-half goal saw Cherries battle back to earn a share of the spoils from a 1-1 draw against Championship strugglers Yeovil Town today.

Fraser cancelled out Kieffer Moore's first-half opener for the Glovers when Byron Webster's clearance struck him and looped over Yeovil goalkeeper Marek Stech, writes **NEIL PERRETT**.

The point kept alive Cherries' play-off hopes with four games of the season remaining, starting with an Easter double-header against Sheffield Wednesday and Ipswich.

Matt Ritchie squandered a presentable chance to fire Cherries ahead after just two minutes when he skied a shot high over the crossbar following a Lewis Grabban cross.

And James Hayter did likewise for the Glovers just two minutes later when he completely missed his kick with the goal gaping after Joe Edwards had centred from the right.

Fraser's low shot was saved comfortably by Yeovil goalkeeper Marek Stech before Lee Camp clutched at the second attempt a thunderous drive from Moore.

However, Camp was powerless to prevent Moore from opening the scoring midway through the first half after Cherries had failed to clear a Jamie McAllister free kick.

The big striker, signed in the summer from Dorchester Town, seized on the loose ball and despatched a venomous right-foot drive into the top corner from 20 yards.

Grabban screwed wide from close range

following a sharp turn inside the 18-yard box after Yann

Kermorgant's neat flick had picked him out. A speculative strike by Grabban at the start of the second half failed to trouble Stech before Moore fired a right-foot effort straight into Camp's hands.

Shane Duffy's glancing header from a Luke Ayling cross flew inches past the upright before Cherries' appeals for a penalty fell on deaf ears following Duffy's handball.

Cherries levelled after 59 minutes through Fraser, although there was more than an element of good fortune as the Scotsman restored parity with a fluke goal.

Stech was caught off his line and watched the ball loop over his head after Byron Webster's clearance had struck Fraser before landing in the back of the net.

Cherries then survived a penalty appeal after Moore had gone to ground and were thankful to Camp for saving with his legs after Webster's flicked effort from a corner had almost squeezed in at the near post.

Fraser ballooned a chance over the crossbar following a Simon Francis cross after 74 minutes, while Tom Lawrence curled a right-foot shot just past the post.

**Cherries:** Camp, Francis, Cook, Elphick, Harte (Smith, 57), Ritchie, Surman, O'Kane, Fraser (Rantle, 80), Grabban (Pitman, 88), Kermorgant.

**Unused subs:** MacDonald, Pugh, Ward, Allsop (g/k). **Booked:** Francis, Cook. **Glovers:** Stech, Ayling, Duffy, Webster, McAllister, Edwards, Palazuelos, Ralls, Lawrence, Moore, Hayter (Hoskins, 90).

**Unused subs:** Twinnasi, Lanzoni, Dawson, Grant, Davis, Dunn (g/k). **Booked:** McAllister. **Referee:** Robert Madley (England). **Attendance:** 6,931 (including 2,074 away supporters).

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# BEAUTIFUL SOUTH

BY DAREN WHEELER

## Rodriguez's injury is a cruel blow for Saints' ambitions

THE news that Jay Rodriguez is out for the best part of six months is terrible news for the young England international.

Rodriguez represents the upside of buying young and English, a talented player knocking firmly on the door of the national squad.

The £27 million paid for him a year or so ago seems like an absolute bargain as he knocked the goals in on a regular basis in the Premier League.

Paying big money for Championship talent is a risky business.

You can either acquire a Nathaniel Clyne or a Jay Rodriguez.

Or you can get a David Nugent and spend an awful lot of money on not a lot of striker.

There are so many pitfalls when it comes to buying English these days.

For so long we seemed to have priced young Englishmen out of a move to a bigger club because the cost of English talent seems ridiculously overpriced.

How can we possibly moan about England's lack of success on the national stage when most clubs look abroad for a cheaper option or the talent we have here just isn't getting tested at the highest level.

You could add a that hardly any English players are playing abroad.

Ask yourself when was the last time an Englishman played at the highest level in Europe?

David Beckham? Michael Owen?

You could realistically argue that both players were well past their prime when they played for Real Madrid and their inclusion was more down to their PR value than their value on the pitch.

Rodriguez's injury is a desperately sad blow for the likeable

Englishman, but if I'm honest he was always an outside bet for a place in the England squad.

Out of the Saints squad, Adam Lallana is a shoe in, a nailed on certainty for a ticket to Brazil.

I've waxed lyrical on him before and won't bore you again with yet another homage.

Rickie Lambert should also have done enough to merit a place on the plane.

I'd take him over Andy Carroll all day long, the only reason there's even the slightest debate over who should go of the two is down to Carroll's price tag and perhaps his age.

On current form and ability, Lambert is by far the better player.

He's a better target man, he brings players into the game and is far more of a team player than Carroll.

The best outside bets are Nathaniel Clyne and Luke Shaw.

Clyne can count himself unlucky not to have featured for England before now.

It's probably only Chambers' good run of form that has probably ruined his inevitable England debut.

Shaw is the better bet of the two; it's hard to believe he's the age he is.

Rumours of his imminent move away from St Mary's have been rife all season and it's hard not to argue against it.

I'd counter that Shaw might be better suited to have another season or two with Saints to get a better grounding.

But the usual argument of "you'll not play first team football" would be lost on Shaw as he'd walk into any first team in the country, and that's a fact.

Rodriguez's injury will either be the making or the breaking of the lad.

He's in great form and any striker with his goal ratio in the Premiership is going to be sought after.

The injury is a massive blow, how often have you seen a players suffer an injury such as that and then subsequently struggle to find that form again after a long period on the treatment table?

Rodriguez will need to take the huge disappointment of missing out on Brazil and channel it into motivating himself to getting back to the sort of form he's been showing this season.

Six months is a long time by anyone's standards.

Only the mentally tough and resolute bounce back from that sort of setback to repeat the success they'd already achieved. If J-Rod returns and, as I said, can channel that disappointment into something positive, then what a player he will become.

In closing, much has been made of this summer and the impact it will have on Saints and the next stage of the Liebherr adventure.

It goes without saying that if Saints can hold on to the players they have, then this summer will already be a resounding success.

At every turn Saints have exceeded their targets.

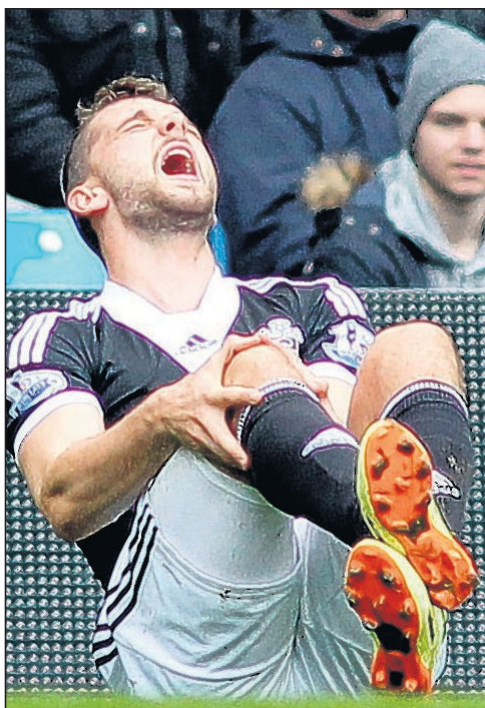
Last season everyone expected us to struggle. We didn't, we flourished.

This season we expected mid table obscurity; instead we're knocking at the door of European qualification.

Bar a couple of disappointing results, we're seriously chasing the likes of Manchester United and Tottenham.

Me, I'm hoping for a summer of stability followed by a January 2015 transfer window of mild activity and improvement.

I'm not asking for much, am I?



**SHAME:** Jay Rodriguez injured at Manchester City last weekend.

# ARSENE IS SAME OLD

## Paine's World

The Saints legend's **EXCLUSIVE** column on all things football



**IT'S been a harrowing last month or so for Arsenal – on and off the pitch.**

The old adage "when it rains it pours" could not be more apt to describe the situation currently plaguing Arsenal.

February and March usually heralds the arrival of season defining games, Mr Wenger talks up their chances and how his team are ready to face them, the fans feel confident buoyed by the good early season form and then the world comes crashing down.

Sound familiar? It should, this has been a recurrent theme over the years.

A once fluid title challenge has now evaporated to reveal the bones of a battle for fourth spot.

Seems everybody but Arsenal saw it coming.

The media and pundits alike for months downplayed Arsenal's title challenge to the chagrin of many a Gooner. Sadly all their premonitions have come true. In the space of a month and a half all hopes now rest on the FA Cup, the trophy Arsenal last won before the drought hit.

If Arsenal were to go on and win the FA Cup, it could act as a catalyst for revival.

But football is a funny little game of glorious uncertainties and an FA Cup win might just paper over wider cracks. The repercussions if Arsenal don't win the cup this year could be immense.

The hostility between the "Arsene Knows Best" and "Wenger Out" brigade has reached critical mass and it only needs one tiny flame to light up this powder keg situation.

### APLOMB

A few seasons back one could sympathise with Arsene, he had to build squads with a meagre budget thanks to the debts incurred on building the Emirates, which he did with aplomb.

Key players left at regular intervals and yet he plodded on building his squads and bringing Arsenal to the brink of greatness only to have it seized due to a combination of injuries, bad luck and lack of mental strength.

This while Chelsea and Man United continued to dominate the landscape of English football, a period that also heralded the rising of the blue moon in the shape of Manchester City.

But now Wenger has the financial backing and things looked promising as Arsenal amassed the highest points total in 2013 and fans dreamt of title No 14.

But the rot of previous seasons seems to have set in once again. Despite the financial clout, Arsene has failed to deliver in the last three transfer windows. The signing of Ozil was massive and turned the summer transfer market from a B- to a B+ window for Arsenal, but the arrival of the German wasn't enough.

The gaping hole of a good competent striker wasn't filled and this has come back to haunt Wenger.

**"Arsenal's once fluid title challenge has evaporated."**

Giroud did a terrific job on his own up until January/February but since then his form has tailed off.

This issue could have been addressed in the January transfer window. A short-term loan for any striker could have been looked at to help Giroud and mitigate the loss of Arsenal's two main goal scoring threats of this season: Theo Walcott and Aaron Ramsey.

Instead, Wenger brought in an injured player as midfield cover in what was one of the most baffling moves of any transfer window ever. Upon further enquiry Wenger said he only had a few hours to make the decision or pull the plug on the transfer. Surely an entire month was enough time to sort out better deals?

Goals are now like mirages for Arsenal fans, you get a glimpse of it once in a while but before you can reach out and grab it they disappear. And the defence is leaking



# FACING THE PROBLEMS



**TIPPING POINT:** Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger and, below, striker Olivier Giroud.

goals at an alarming rate. The maulings at Anfield, Stamford Bridge and most recently at Goodison Park have knocked the stuffing out of the squad.

After the Goodison defeat, Wenger was quoted as saying that he could not put his finger on what was missing. What has perturbed most Arsenal fans was the complete lack of fight within the squad.

The biggest example of this was when Ross Barkley shoved Arteta to the ground and not one Arsenal player went to defend him.

## INTERNAL DRIVE

Games are won as much on the pitch as they are in the minds, that internal drive and motivation has to exist to succeed. The body language of Arsenal players in recent times suggests that they don't believe anymore. If there is anything evo-

lution has taught us it is that the ability to adapt is vital for survival.

This principle can be applied to the football world too and that is why managers like Mourinho, Guardiola and Ferguson have had such unparalleled success. They change tactics and adapt as the games and situations demand. Wenger on the other hand has stuck to his age old formulae that simply isn't effective against the bigger teams. When Arsene first arrived in England he heralded a revolution that yielded multiple rewards. He needs to rekindle that spirit to restore the club to its former glory.



**CRUCIAL:** Hugo Rodallega and Lewis Holtby celebrate Fulham's away win at Aston Villa.

## Fulham might just survive...

DO not write them off just yet. Displaying a fight that has been sorely lacking for most of the season, Fulham managed to scrape themselves off the foot of the table and breathe new life into their bid to avoid the drop.

It was a precious away victory, and a first at Villa Park in the Premier League in 15 attempts, and it couldn't have come at a better time.

Masterminded by their German coaches' bold half-time substitutions, Fulham produced a stirring second half performance that was capped with a Hugo Rodallega winner in the 86th minute. It was just reward for their performance, which was a far cry from their showings earlier this season.

The victory moved them up to 18th place and brought them within five points of Norwich City, who they'll face at Craven Cottage this weekend.

Felix Magath knew just how important victory was for his team.

He said: "It was the last chance for us here to stay in the league. It was very important for us to win."

"You can imagine now how the players in the locker room are happy, happy and they forced me to give them two days off, so I have. They deserved it today."

The relegation has seemed a foregone conclusion for a number of weeks now, but victory today will have Felix Magath believing he can pull off the great escape. Confidence will be drawn from the fact that they have found themselves in this position before.

Six years ago, Fulham entered the last six matches on a measly 24 points, the same total they had before their match with Villa. On that occasion it was Roy Hodgson who inspired them to four wins in their final six games, as they fended off relegation by the finest of margins.

They will need a similar miracle this season to stave off the threat of Championship football, which could prove catastrophic for the club. A spiralling wage bill and dependency on Premier League television rights, cost-cutting measures will need to be implemented if they were to fall through the trap door. Last season Fulham spent £66.5m on wages – a staggering 89.6 per cent of revenue. Such expenditure in the

Championship will cripple the club, and they risk heading in the same direction as Portsmouth.

Magath said he will stay on should he fail to save them, but with an aging squad it may be a long way back to the top for the West London club. It's not all doom and gloom though, as Fulham's U18s have made their way through to the FA Youth Cup Final.

Inspired by a Moussa Dembele hat-trick, they managed a 3-2 victory over Reading to book their place in the final. The young French striker has made his way into the first team squad recently, as Magath looks to freshen things up with some youthful enthusiasm.

There's no doubt that the German has had a positive influence since his arrival at Craven Cottage. A Bundesliga winner in Germany, he certainly has the pedigree behind his name, but with a team that has gone from one catastrophe to the next.

Stories of a brutal training regime and ridiculous fines abound, but his team looks an altogether happier bunch since his arrival.

And there has been an upturn in form.

Against Everton they played as well as they have managed all season, without reward.

The fans have given him their full backing and his team has responded.

And they are blessed with one of the easier run-ins, on paper at least. Home games against the Canaries, Hull and Crystal Palace will decide their fate.

It's all set up for a great finale at the foot of the table, with neither of the three teams looking likely to avoid the ignominy of relegation.

The Premier League though never ceases to surprise us with its twist and turns, so I would never write Fulham off, in spite of their circumstances.

A few weeks ago they were labelled as Premier League down-and-outs, and rightfully so, but they seem to be showing a belief that no other bottom-three club has at the moment. Credit must be given to Magath who has turned a thankless task into a possible Great Escape.

Fulham have been given a lifeline, it would be a waste if they were to squander it.



## HILLSBOROUGH - WHAT THEY SAID

"I went to pick up the ball. All they said was, 'They're killing us, Bruce, they're killing us'. And I thought, 'Who'? I took the kick and kicked it away. Voices through the fence. I looked round, and I could see the fright on the people's faces through the fence, and I said to the policeman: 'Is there any chance that you can open the gate here?'"

"Then a shot went past, and the ball was away in the corner. I went to retrieve it, and I said to the policeman - I thought it was a policeman - 'Get the effing gate open. Can't you see that they need it?'"

"And there were screams coming at the time. I kicked the ball upfield, and I went back and said, 'Get the \*\*\*\*\* gate open'. I turned back and the ball went out of play on the left, and that's when I shouted to the referee. The policeman came on to the field, and the game stopped."

**BRUCE GROBBELAAR, LIVERPOOL GOALKEEPER**

"The first I knew of the trouble was when two fans came on to the pitch. As they ran past me, I told them, 'Get off - you'll get us into trouble'."

"One of them shouted, 'There are people dying back there, Al'. I could see some people trying to get over the terrace fence but, because I was concentrating so much on the game, his com-



**EMOTIONAL:** Grobbelaar at the Hillsborough requiem.

ment did not really register with me.

"Much as I hate to admit it, my reaction was one of cynicism. I remember thinking, 'Oh, yeah?'"

"The next moment, the referee had stopped the game and the two teams were being taken back to the dressing rooms."

"The scene in the dressing room was little different from what I had experienced at Heysel, in as much as nobody knew the extent of what was happening outside."

"Professional footballers are conditioned to concentrate on a game, shutting out all distractions, and it can take time to step out of match mode."

"At Hillsborough, we were all aware that something terrible was happening on the terraces, but with the adrenaline pumping we were still half thinking of the jobs we had to do."

**ALAN HANSEN, LIVERPOOL DEFENDER**

Suddenly I saw the referee Ray Lewis tap Ronnie Whelan and say, 'Come on, we're going off'."

"I turned around to look back behind our goal to witness scenes of chaos with spectators climbing over the fence and into the upper areas of the stand and spilling over on to the pitch."

"The players trotted off down the tunnel, thinking at the time that whatever problems there were, they would all be sorted out very quickly."

**PETER BEARDSLEY, LIVERPOOL FORWARD**

# Hillsborough, April 15, 1989 - 25 years on ...

# WILL THE 96 EVER



**HILLSBOROUGH:** Scenes from April 15, 1989, and the memorial which stands outside the main gates at Anfield.

## Hillsborough - 25 years of hurt

**EVERY anniversary of the Hillsborough Disaster has had its own poignancy, but this year's 25th has the feeling of something greater than just a landmark number.**

Ever since the tragedy in 1989, families of the 96 victims have searched for an explanation as to why their loved ones went to a football game and never came home, writes **CARL MARKHAM.**

They are hopeful they will finally get those answers at new inquests that began last month, after the original verdicts were quashed, and the families do feel they are nearing the end of their quest.

It will not, of course, ease the pain of losing a loved one, but gaining closure on such a traumatic event may allow them to move on in some way.

Most have been revisiting the happenings of that spring afternoon in

Sheffield ever since, and with every family having their own heartbreaking tale to tell they are at least being able to highlight the impact the tragedy has had on them, with the inquests hearing statements from representatives of all the 96.

There were some positives to come out of the tragedy, not least the recommendations of the Taylor Report which led to the introduction of all-seater stadia in England's top two divisions and the removal of fences at the front of stands.

Also, the way in which the city came together united in grief was memorable and highlighted at the all-Merseyside FA Cup final less than six weeks after the disaster.



Liverpool, as a club, handled themselves with dignity and embraced the community.

The cards of condolence, the personal trinkets and the ocean of flowers bedecked across Anfield is an image many will remember.

That, and the empathy of then-Liverpool manager Kenny Dalglish, pictured.

No one teaches you how to deal with disaster, it relies on instinct and natural humanity, and Dalglish's sensitive handling of Hillsborough cemented his legend in the hearts of Merseysiders.

Famously, he described the floral tributes at Anfield as the "saddest and most beautiful sight" he had ever seen.

"He tied the teddy bears of his own children to the Anfield goalposts, made countless hospital visits, talking to several young fans who lay in comas."

He and wife Marina attended

countless funerals - four on one particularly harrowing day alone - and there is little doubt the strain of handling such momentous grief contributed to Dalglish relinquishing his role as manager in 1991.

"I will never, never forget April 15, 1989. I cannot even think of the name Hillsborough, cannot even say the word, without so many distressing memories flooding back," Dalglish wrote in his autobiography.

The Hillsborough statistics are stark. A total of 94 people died on the day, with 766 other fans injured and around 300 being taken to hospital.

Four days later, the death toll reached 95 when 14-year-old Lee Nicol died from his injuries and the final toll became 96 in March 1993 when Tony Bland died after remaining in a coma for nearly four years.

Significant developments over the last 18 months will hopefully ensure the 96 can finally rest in peace.

**READ THE ADAM RANT COLUMN ON PAGE 22**



# Hillsborough, April 15, 1989 – 25 years on ... REST IN PEACE ...?



## HILLSBOROUGH - WHAT THEY SAID

"Tears, anger and confusion tore through all of us. We hadn't known Jon-Paul was at the game. He went to Anfield all the time, but an FA Cup semi-final was a special treat."

"Granddad explained. Jon-Paul's mum, Jackie, had somehow managed to get a ticket. She knew how much it meant to Jon-Paul to see his heroes in such an important match."

It was only in Sheffield, barely 70 miles away. And he wanted to go.

A friend of the family took Jon-Paul. They set off from Liverpool that Saturday morning, all buzzing with excitement, but Jon-Paul never returned. Never returned from the match. Those words will haunt me forever.

"Hillsborough must never be allowed to happen again. No one should lose a life or a relative at a football match."

"Every time I see Jon-Paul's name cut into the cold marble outside the Shankly Gates, I fill with sadness and anger."

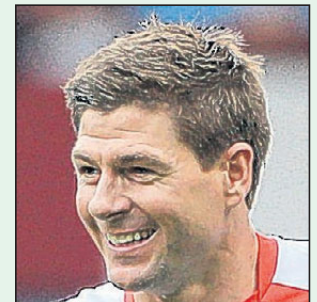
"I have never let anyone know this before, but it's true: I play for Jon-Paul."

**STEVEN GERRARD, LIVERPOOL CAPTAIN, WHOSE COUSIN JON-PAUL GILHOOLEY WAS KILLED**

"People wept all the way home. All the wives were crying. I was crying. Kenny was crying. Bruce said he was considering quitting."

"Although I never thought about giving up football despite being filled with guilt afterwards, I understood what Bruce meant."

"Those Liverpool fans went to Hillsborough to watch us and there we were, stepping on to a luxury coach to go home, and they were being laid out



**STEVEN GERRARD**

in a temporary morgue.

"As we travelled back across the Pennines, their mums and dads were making the reverse journey to come and identify their children's bodies."

Guilt swirled around my head."

**JOHN BARNES, LIVERPOOL WINGER**

"I don't know how many funerals I went to. (My wife) Marina and I went to four in one day. We got a police escort between them."

"All the funerals were harrowing. All those families mourning the loss of their loved ones."

"Most of the church services finished with 'You'll Never Walk Alone'."

"I couldn't sing through any of the songs or hymns. I was too choked up. The words would never come out. I just stood there in a daze, still trying to come to terms with what had befallen the club and the people I so admired..."

"The last funeral I went to was as harrowing as the first. I didn't get used to the grieving. Every funeral devastated me, as another family bade farewell to somebody they loved and shared life with."

**KENNY DALGLISH, LIVERPOOL MANAGER**

### TWENTY five years of hell.

That is what the families of victims of the Hillsborough Disaster have been through.

Margaret Aspinall, chairman of the Hillsborough Family Support Group, lost her son James in the 1989 tragedy, which claimed the lives of 96 Liverpool fans.

No-one outside of those families affected can truly appreciate what they have been through in the intervening years, but there is a sense they will soon have closure.

After a long fight, campaigners succeeded in their quest to have the victims' original inquest verdicts quashed and new hearings, now under way, held.

"It has been 25 years of hell really. I can't say it any differently, I may as well be honest," said Aspinall.

"I've faced things because I've gained strength from those 96, but it has been a hell of a journey."

"People think you are strong when you are doing interviews but we're not, what we are doing - and I think what the club and fans do with us - is fighting for something that's right."

"We are not fighting for something that was wrong, that was not truth-

**'You say 'if you give up on yourself you are giving up on your child, you are giving up on the people who were there and you are giving up on your city ...'**

ful, and to have to be fighting for 25 years for that has been one hell of a journey."

"This city needs closure. I don't know what closure is for all of the families, I can only talk about closure for me personally and that is hopefully to get what is right, proper and just and what we should have had 25 years ago and then everyone hopefully can move on."

"We will never ever be winners - the 96 families will always be the losers - but we



have to be able to move on and let the city and club move on."

"We can't do that until we have what is right, what is proper and what is truth. It is as simple as that."

The families have faced many legal hurdles over the last few years but the decision to have new inquests held was seen as a real victory.

The new inquests could last up to a year, but Aspinall, left, believes the end of their struggle is in sight.

"We have gone through so much, been to so many courts and judicial reviews and been knocked

back so many times, I have seen families literally on their knees in a terrible state," she added.

"But you come home and get the support from ordinary people urging us not to give up, and you say to yourself 'if you give up on yourself you are giving up on your child'."

"If you give up the other 95 then you are giving up on the people who were there that day, and you are giving up on your city because our city took a hammering as well."

"We still have got a long way to go. We've had no accountability and no-one knows what is going to happen through these (new) inquests but we feel it is time, especially with it being the 25th anniversary, to be united."

**SAINTS v CARDIFF NOSTALGIA - SEE PAGES 28-29**



SOUTHERN  
**Daily Echo**

# FIND THE BALL



## THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT

# £50,000

## or £24,000

Shared nearest miss prize

**PLUS 70 consolation prizes of £15 each week****20 for Southern Daily Echo**  
**20 for Daily Echo Bournemouth**  
**10 for Dorset Echo**  
**10 for Sunday Independent**  
**10 for Brighton Argus**

**F**IND THE BALL is a test of skill and football knowledge and is open to readers of the Southampton, Bournemouth, Dorset Echos, Brighton Argus and Sunday Independent, Plymouth.

You have to use your skill and judgement to determine the exact centre of the ball.

Mark an X with a ballpoint pen on the picture where you consider that position to be – clear rubber stamps and self adhesive labels will also be accepted.

Every coupon will be carefully examined and the jackpot prize will be paid to the entrant whose cross marks the exact centre of the ball when the photograph was taken.

If the Jackpot is not won, £1,000 will be added to next week's jackpot and £50 will be added to the nearest-miss prize.

The nearest-miss prize will be paid out to the competitor whose cross is nearest to the centre of the ball when there is no jackpot winner.

When a jackpot has been won the next week's prize reverts back to £6,000 and the nearest-miss prize at £1,000.

If the Jackpot is not won after 45 weeks, when standing at £50,000, three nearest miss prizes will be awarded totalling £24,000 – with a first prize of £12,000, a second prize of £8,000 and a third prize of £4,000.

The jackpot for the following week will be £26,000 with £1,000 being added each week. The nearest miss prize will be £2,000 with £50 added each week until the jackpot prize reaches £50,000.

If there is still no entry showing the exact centre of the ball, the process is repeated until there is an exact centre of the ball winner.

If there is more than one winner the jackpot will be shared and, similarly, if there is more than one runner-up the nearest miss prize will also be shared.

### RESULTS



**CLOSING DATE FOR POSTAL ENTRIES**  
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9am,  
17 April  
2014  
Names of winners will be published on  
Saturday,  
19 April  
or Sunday  
20 April  
2014

An incident in a Winchester City v Taunton Town match

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G Benmore, Bournemouth, Dorset	A Lewis, Southampton, Hants
J Blakely, Southampton, Hants	M Ricketts, Southampton, Hants
S Bonella, Southampton, Hants	A Stacey, Southampton, Hants
E Depoix, Southampton, Hants	S Teal, Lymington, Hants
M Duell, Totton, Hants	L White, Southampton, Hants
D Dumper, Eastleigh, Hants	E Williams, New Milton, Hants
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**1.** You are allowed a minimum of 60 crosses and a maximum of 325 per coupon. Coupons with 326 or more will be disqualified. Entries altered defaced or mutilated will be invalid. Crosses must be distinct and separate. **2.** Competitors may submit as many coupons as they wish. Members of a family can send their entries in one envelope with a covering postal order or cheque. **3.** No responsibility can be accepted for entries delayed, lost or mislaid. Proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. **4.** Payment may be made by postal order or cheque for the correct amount payable to Newsquest, and crossed 'X' Co. Stamps will not be accepted in payment. **5.** A competitor cannot win more than one share of the prize money across all titles each week. **6.** The Editor's decision on winning entry or entries and matters relating to this competition is binding in honour only. NO CORRESPONDENCE CAN BE ENTERED INTO. **7.** Employees of NEWSQUEST Media Group and subsidiary companies and members of their families are not eligible to enter the competition. **8.** Address entries to FTB PO Box 24 Competitions, Southampton SO16 9ZD in a sealed envelope. Understamped entries are not accepted. **9.** Prize monies are held for and on behalf of winners. **10.** Do not send cash in the post. **11.** Winners will be required to participate in publicity. **12.** Photocopies not accepted. **13.** For rules go to [www.dailyecho.co.uk/promotions/rules](http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/promotions/rules), [www.newsquest.co.uk/terms](http://www.newsquest.co.uk/terms) or write in for a copy.



# Non-league Action

Sydenhams Wessex Premier: **Winchester City 4 Totton & Eling 0**



# WHAM, BAM, THANK YOU SAM

## FANTASTIC FOUR:

Winchester City's Sam Wilson celebrates his fourth goal, above and right.

Daily Echo pictures by Paul Collins  
Order nos: 18302909 (above) and 18302936 (right)



**SAM Wilson took centre stage as Winchester City celebrated the first anniversary of their rebirth with a convincing score-line over Totton & Eling.**

The former Eastleigh striker scored all four goals in a handsome 4-0 Sydenhams Premier Division win for Neil Hards' men.

In common with grounds up and down the country, kick off was put back to 3.07pm and preceded by a minute's silence in tribute to those who died in the Hillsborough disaster.

Winchester, still without injured duo Chris Flood and Lloyd Webber, lobbed the effort on target but there was no real power behind Sam Wilson's shot on the turn.

With the weight of relegation worries now lifted off their shoulders, T&E were full of running with the pacey Jude Nwachukwu and top gun Dougie Rowe trying to unsettle the

**Wendy Gee**

wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk

**NON-LEAGUE REPORTER**

City defence.

But it was Winchester who took the lead on 19 minutes via the penalty spot.

Millers skipper Adam Lowther conceded it for a foul on Taz Roberts and ex-Eastleigh striker WILSON sent Kevin O'Rourke the wrong way from 12 yards.

The game reminded highly competitive with both sides getting some strong tackles in, but there was little by way of goalmouth excitement until Winchester made it 2-0 just after the half hour with a well-constructed goal.

Darryl Phillips played the ball out to the left of the area and Danny King delivered for WILSON to bury his second of the game from inside the six-yard box.

A third was beckoning for Winchester on 41 minutes when big frontman Phillips brought the ball under control and powered goalwards, but in trying to steer the ball wide of the exposed O'Rourke he pulled it past the post.

Phillips soon needed treatment after the highly competitive Lowther had put in his third hefty challenge of the game – this time at the expense of a booking.

As the half entered stoppage time Winchester cleared a dangerous flicked header by Lee Thorne at one end and then Chris Mason wasn't far away with a nicely weighted shot at the other.

City lost skipper Leigh Mills to injury at half time and brought Liam Green off the bench.

The home side made most of the early running with Mason unleashing a firm strike at O'Rourke before playing a useful ball forward to Wilson

who was closed down by the keeper when well placed.

Winchester had a real hunger about them in the second half and on 69 minutes the lively Wilson completed his hat-trick, punishing a mistake by keeper O'Rourke.

Four minutes later T&E's defence was carved open again, giving WILSON freedom of the Denplan City Ground to race through one-on-one and score his and City's fourth of the afternoon.

Totton kept going with a Lowther sending a free-kick just wide.

Then, with a couple of minutes of normal time remaining, City substitute Zakk Kaiser showed good movement on the right of the area and flashed a dangerous ball across goal which just eluded fellow sub Reece Rusher.

Right at the death City keeper Ross Casey scrambled to his right to gather a low shot by T&E sub Sam Jenman.

## Eastleigh move point closer to promotion

SKRILL CONFERENCE SOUTH  
Chelmsford 0 Eastleigh 0

Eastleigh moved a point closer to promotion but Sutton's 3-1 win against Ebbsfleet means they still need four points to clinch the title.

Eastleigh went into this match knowing they could be crowned champions. They made three changes with Will Evans, Yemi Odubade and Dan Wishart coming in with Stuart Fleetwood and Dean Beckwith injured.

Chelmsford looked the liveliest side at the start and Michael Cheek had a good chance but he just hit the ball forward too far and Michael Green was able to clear off the line.

Matthew Lock was also not too far off target with a free kick as Chelmsford, captained by former Spitfire Mark Hughes, were putting Eastleigh under pressure at the start as they needed the points at the other end of the table.

However, Eastleigh finished the half strongly and they had four attacks in the last five minutes of the half.

Jai Reason, pictured, had the best chance but, with the goalkeeper out of position, his effort was narrowly wide.

Odubade and Reason both forced saves from

Chelmsford goalkeeper Carl Pentney.

This was their fifth away draw since the beginning of March and, although Ben Wright and Dan Wishart forced saves from Pentney in the home goal, it was

Chelmsford had the better chances in the second half and Luke Callender and Michael Cheek both had chances that they would be disappointed they did not make more of.

It was never a classic game but, from an Eastleigh point of view, with three of their four remaining games at home, they must be hopeful that they can complete the job.

Chelmsford's Melbourne Road Stadium has never been a happy hunting ground for Eastleigh as they have drawn three times and lost three times on this ground without winning.





# Non-league Football

## Brad's the way to do it

YOUNG Brad Haimes became a trailblazer for Fareham Town's youth development when he went on as a substitute against Winchester City last Saturday.

He became the first player to make his first-team debut having featured for Town's youth set-up when it started five years ago.

Fareham lost striker Gary Austin and goalkeeper Luke Douglas to injury during the game and another young gun, keeper Sam Bunton, went on a did well during the 1-1 draw.

"We started with a bare bones 11 and a number of 18-year-olds on the bench," said manager Matt Parr.

Fareham followed up with a 5-0 win over Lymington Town on Tuesday - Wayne Boud (2), Mark Cotton, Graham Lindsey and Mark Wheeler on target.

Haimes again went on as a substitute and it was a special night too for Boud who scored his 50th goal for the Creeksiders.

Fareham's eager-beaver statisticians also confirmed that victory gained the club their 1000th Wessex League point.

## Walker on goalden run

WHITCHURCH United's leading scorer Luke Walker has left Longmeadow.

Walker - scorer of 24 goals in 32 Wessex starts for the Jam Boys this season - has joined Combined Counties League side Hartley Wintney.

Walker hit the ground running for his new club scoring three goals in two matches against Frimley Green and Wembley. Unfortunately for Hartley, however, both games ended in narrow defeats.

Hartley bounced back with a 2-1 win at Hanworth Villa on Tuesday. This time it was another former Whitchurch striker, ex-Saint Sam Argent, who plundered both goals.

## Town Call

CALLUM Davies has joined Romsey Town from Sydenhams Premier rivals Blackfield & Langley.

The tireless defender was an AFC Totton/New Milton player prior to joining Blackfield.

As a 19-year-old, Davies famously made his Southern League debut for AFC Totton against Bashley on Easter Monday 2012.

He had played a full 90 for New Milton in a noon kick-off against Moneyfields earlier that day and expected to be named on the Totton bench for the 3pm game at Bashley.

However, after teammate Charlie Knight had been injured during the warm-up, he was asked to start by then Stags boss Stuart Ritchie and played his part in an action-packed 4-4 draw, finally being substituted midway through the second half.

## DAN'S A BIG FAN OF THE MAGPIES

**HE may have got the better of them last weekend, but Folland Sports boss Danny Bowers remains a huge admirer of Alresford Town.**

Something had to give when the two teams met at Follands Park on Saturday with both boasting identical records of 13 wins and a draw from their previous 14 Sydenhams Premier games.

And it was Bowers' Planemakers who kept their magnificent unbeaten run going with a 1-0 victory thanks to skipper Jamie Barron's 25th goal of the season.

It could be said that Alresford indirectly contributed to their own downfall with Bowers admitting before the game that his admiration for the Magpies had shaped his own approach to the Follands job.

He said: "Alresford have had the same group of players now for four or five years and what's nice is that a lot of people expected them to be one-hit wonders last year, but they weren't and they've grown in depth.

"Players could have left there for money, but it shows what a good club they are and what good management they've got that they've stuck together.

"Alresford don't have a revolving door and we're trying to learn a bit from that.

"We've got a young side that we want to keep together and build on what we've done this season. There are exciting times ahead at Follands.

"Alresford have shown it's not all about chucking money around, it's about stability."

With top gun Warren Bentley sidelined by injury, it was only the third league game Alresford had failed to score in this season - the previous two being back in August!

Had Zach Glasspool's early effort been a fraction lower instead of skimming the crossbar, it could have been a different story but, ultimately, Follands were good value for their win.

The breakthrough came midway through the first half when Matt Burt flicked on Pip Nolan's throw and Barron's shot hit both posts on its way in.

Ryan Long later lobbed 'keeper Jason Collins only to see it go agonisingly wide and Mike Turvey wasn't far away either after some typically dazzling approach play.

"We could have had two or three goals and, if we had, people would

**ALRESFORD ADMIRER:**  
Danny Bowers.

have thought it was an easy game. But it wasn't," stressed Bowers.

"Alresford are a fantastic side with quality all over the pitch. For me, they're on a par with Sholing.

"It was the best game of football I have watched at our ground for as long as I can remember.

"It was a real good, hard-fought match and there wasn't a bad tackle in it.

"If I hadn't seen a Wessex game before and that was the first game I'd witnessed, I would have thought it was of a very high standard.

"I know Alresford were missing Warren

Bentley but, by the same token, we had no James Roden, Daniel Mason or Ryan Fuller.

"Alresford's chairman Trevor Ingram was very gracious and said we thoroughly deserved the win."

## Alresford keep cup

ALRESFORD Town have won the North Hants Senior Cup for the third season running.

Zach Glasspool's double - and the return of his strike partner Warren Bentley from injury - made for a night of Magpies' celebrations as Whitchurch United were defeated 2-1 at Andover New Street's Foxcott Park.

Alresford almost took a first-minute lead when Mike McEnery's shot was parried by 'keeper Ashley West. Then, at the other end, Jason Collins did well to smother at Nic Turpin's feet.

Bentley soon made his presence felt with a slide-rule pass to Glasspool who duly tucked away the opener with just three-and-a-half hectic minutes gone.

The game then settled down with only half-chances for either side until, on 43 minutes, Turpin dug out an equaliser, running on to a long ball and beating Collins with a cool finish.

Alresford regained control at the start of the second half with West tipping Bentley's shot away for a corner.

The 49-goal marksman then made another telling contribution, bursting into the box where he was brought down by Chris Smalley's late tackle. The referee signalled a penalty and Glasspool stepped up to the spot to bury his second of the game.

With Isaac Sedu making some pacy runs, Whitchurch pressed for an equaliser and might have got one in the 82nd minute when Alresford failed to clear a corner. Turpin got his head to the ball as it came back into the box, but it landed on top of the net.

## Bradbury slams ref

HAVANT & Waterlooville boss Lee Bradbury was furious with the late postponement of Tuesday's home game against Maidenhead United.

The Hawks' Skril Conference South play-off push was scuppered by a heavy downpour at around 5.30pm.

Match referee Rob Hyde had a couple of looks at the playing surface and called the game off at 6.48pm.

The official was concerned about a muddy section in the middle of the pitch which he regarded as unsafe. But Bradbury was deeply unhappy with the decision, branding it "an absolute disgrace".

Havant are already behind with their fixtures due to a combination of an exceptionally wet winter and their progress to the semi-finals of the FA Trophy.

Bradbury said: "We have played games in a lot worse conditions than this."

**CALL NON-LEAGUE WRITER WENDY GEE ON 023 8042 4483**



# Non-league Football

# McFARLANE: WE CAN MAKE SHO WAY PAY

**Wendy Gee**

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**NON-LEAGUE REPORTER**

**JOHN McFarlane hopes the success of Sholing, Alresford Town and Folland Sports signals a change of attitude in the Sydenhams Wessex League.**

It's been a stunning 2013/14 campaign for all three clubs with title favourites Sholing heading to Wembley for the FA Vase final, Alresford on course to defend the Sydenhams League Cup and Follands eyeing a best ever third-placed finish in the Wessex Premier.

The common bond between the trio is squad stability – a refreshing alternative to the constant coming and going of players which Follands boss Danny Bowers refers to as the “revolving door.”

And McFarlane, recently appointed as co-boss of relegation battlers Romsey Town, believes the very thing that has contributed to the Bypass boys' struggles this season – i.e. the tender age and inexperience of their squad – could prove Town's salvation in the long run.



**JOHN MCFARLANE**

He said: “Every year two clubs get relegated from the Wessex Premier and it should never be the case that because the side goes down, all the players leave and the club falls apart.”

“We've seen time and time again that if something goes wrong at clubs with a bit of money, all the players just walk away.”

“That's not the way to go, is it? Clubs can't just buy a team every year with no long-term vision. They should be promoting youth from the local area and bringing young players through and that way you're never going to



**STAYING PUT:** Lee Wort, right, and the rest of the Sholing side all stayed on last summer.

## Romsey co-boss hails stability of league's top 3

get a situation where they all just walk away.

“Look at Sholing. They came down (voluntarily) from the Southern League and how many players left? I don't think any of them did and that's credit to them.”

“Initially everyone was chasing short-term success, but people are beginning to realise now that clubs need stability and you get that by bringing in young, local players.”

“Even though Romsey are struggling this season, I get phone calls all the time from players wanting to come to training.”

“It's crazy, but it just goes to show

that you'll never have problems getting players in because there are so many who want to play local to where they live.”

McFarlane is also of the opinion that managers don't have to win leagues and trophies to be successful, they just have to be working and building something long-term.

“Dave Diaper's been at Sholing for years and Danny Bowers went to Follands, left, and came back again,” he said. “The key for me is that you need to settle down at one club, see what the vision is and build something.”

“Whatever club I'm at next season – and it might well be Romsey – I want to be working for a club with a clear vision of where they want to go.”

Frustratingly for McFarlane and co-boss Carl Bennett, there is nothing they can do to change Romsey's predicament right now.

Last Saturday's 2-1 defeat at McFarlane's old club Blackfield & Langley plonked them back at the foot of the table and, with just two games remaining, Town don't play again until Winchester City visit on Easter Monday (April 21).

Until then, all they can do is keep their fingers tightly crossed that results go against fellow relegation battlers Downton and Fawley.

“By the time we play Winchester we'll know one way or the other if we're still in it going into the last week,” said McFarlane.

“I've told our lads not to worry about the table. They're a young group and a good bunch and they just need to work hard, enjoy playing for each other and whatever will be will be.”

## Ham chips in with a double

THERE was a rich irony to Brockenhurst's 2-0 defeat of Sydenhams Wessex title favourites Sholing on Tuesday.

Both goals were scored by striker Braiden Hamilton who, not so long ago, featured high on the Boatmen's 'wanted' list.

Brock boss Pat McManus managed to talk the youngster into staying at Grigg Lane, but Hamilton does have one foot in the Sholing camp having signed Wyvern Combination forms for them.

McManus recalled: “Sholing put in a seven-day notice of approach for Braiden, but I didn't want him to go and I talked him round.”

“It transpired that their initial approach for him to play for their Wyvern reserve side would have included him signing for their first team too.”

“But we counted it as two approaches and called in the ruling that you can't come back in for someone after a period of time.”

“I'm glad we did now – and I think Braiden is too.”

Hamilton – a former Eastleigh reserve player – punished a defensive error on the hour before bagging a second late on.

“Braiden did what I asked him to do and put pressure on them when they'd got the ball at the back,” McManus explained.

### Ruined

“We know they like to get the ball forward as quickly as they can and we pressed them high up the pitch. Our players were ruined afterwards!” he smiled.

Having come triumphantly through a high-pressure FA Vase semi-final at Eastbourne three days earlier, Sholing shuffled their pack but still fielded six of the players who had started in East Sussex.

Complimenting Brock for their high-octane approach, Boatmen's boss Dave Diaper said: “After a tough Vase semi-final the last thing we needed was a load of energetic youngsters flying round us!”

“Brock did really well playing high-energy football and closing us down.”

For the mid-table Badgers, it was their third win on the bounce and fourth game without defeat, bringing a measure of consistency that has eluded them for much of the season.

Although they have taken some impressive scalps like Winchester City, Blackfield & Langley and, now, Sholing, their Achilles heel has been maintaining that form against the lower sides.

“I feel we've consolidated in the last four games,” said McManus. “Harry Jeffries is back along with Tom Hill, and Cass Newton and Joe Chamberlain have come in and made a difference.”

“Our average age against Sholing was 20.5 and if you look at the side they put out, you can't really say they were weakened.”

“I wouldn't look at their line-up and say we beat a weakened Sholing side.”

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# Non-league Football

## Burgess wins pro contract

TOTTON College student Jake Burgess is to sign a one-year professional contract with Leyton Orient after winning the Samsung Win A Pro Contract competition.

The 16-year-old, from Whiteparish near Salisbury, beat more than 5,700 entrants to win the life-changing dream contract with the League One club.

The midfielder made it through a series of regional trials and assessment days, before competing in an 11-a-side Final at Orient's Matchroom Stadium.

Following the final, Burgess was one of two players selected by O's manager Russell Slade to spend a few days of intense boot-camp training with the first-team squad.

Burgess, who plays for Salisbury City FC, was then picked after impressing Slade and Orient coaching staff.

He said: "I really didn't expect to win, so when I was told by Russell that I was the winner I was really shocked – but very pleased!

"It's an absolute dream come true to become a professional footballer.

"I got straight on the phone to my



**PRO DEAL:** Jake Burgess.

grandparents to tell them the news and they were really excited for me.

"I can't wait to get started at Orient now, all of the players and staff are great and I'm really looking forward to working hard for them in the future.

"For now I'm going to be dedicating my time to working on my fitness in the gym and playing as much football as possible, before joining with the squad where the real work starts."

Burgess will now look to join up with the Orient squad in the next few months, before signing his professional contract in June.

Slade said: "Jake showed a good attitude and potential throughout the entire process.

"When he came in to train with us and play, he showed that he has ability that we can work with and hopefully develop.

"I'm really pleased for Jake and his family and hope he seizes the opportunity with both hands."

Four hopefuls are still waiting to see who will be chosen to win the year-long contracts still up for grabs at partner clubs Swindon Town and Wycombe Wanderers.

Sky Sports will be showing a three-part documentary on Samsung Win A Pro Contract later this year.



## Lack of playing budget no

NEW Verwood Town boss Carl Poore insists that lack of a playing budget need prove no barrier to progress in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

The former Poole Town skipper, pictured left, has made the two-tier jump to Potterne Park from managing Cranborne in the Dorset Premier League.

He succeeds long-serving Verwood chief Adie Arnold – the most successful manager in Potters' history – who stood down last month after becoming

frustrated by the battle to make progress without any resources at his disposal.

Asked whether he had any reservations about working with an amateur side in a largely semi-professional league, Poore said: "I don't see it as a drawback at all.

"When you pay players, they are far more likely to go elsewhere if they're offered an extra £10 a week.

"If you pay them nothing, you know straight away they are there for the

right reasons.

"Verwood have had such a rapid rise under Adie and we have to be realistic.

"We have to look to comfortably stay in the division for the next couple of seasons, build on the momentum as much as we can and start looking up the table."

Managerial rookie Poore, 31, captained Poole Town to promotion from the Wessex League and to the FA Vase semi-final in 2011.

## MILLERS' GOAL-DEN OLDIE

**TOTTON & Eling co-boss Matt Hussey pulled off a rare feat last Saturday by scoring his first Wessex League goal in a decade at the ripe 'old' age of 38.**

And how did he celebrate? By trying to replicate the acrobatics of his athletic, young teammate Jude Nwachukwu who is almost half his age!

Hussey's collectors' item – scored from a cross by fellow sub Eddie Zanin – crowned T&E's 5-3 victory over Verwood Town at Millers Park, writes **WENDY GEE**.

With three first-team regulars working and two more suspended, he and 53-year-old ex-Saint Dave Puckett, the club coach, once again helped out on the bench and were called into action with around ten minutes remaining.

Asked how his older brother had celebrated his predatory finish, co-boss Stuart Hussey laughed: "Believe it or not, he tried to do a somersault like Jude does!

"Jude's been told by Dave Puckett not to do it any more because it's too risky, but he did it again on Saturday when he scored our first goal, running and flicking himself into the air, no hands – and Matt tried to replicate it!

"I'm not sure how long it's been since Matt scored a Wessex goal, but I don't remember him scoring one when we were managing at Lymington Town, so I guess the last time was about ten years ago at Lymington & New Milton."

The two Husseys and Puckett have amassed more than 20 league starts between them this season and there have been times when, without them, the Millers wouldn't have been able to field a full team.

"It's not what we want, but a lot of clubs are like it – especially at this stage of the season," said the younger Hussey.

"When we got to about 30



**RARE GOAL:** Matt Hussey, left.

minutes, a couple of the lads were struggling and we took off Joe Herbert and Matt Gray and put on Dave and Matt at 4-2.

"(Veteran winger) Ben Thompson was still out there and Thommo joked that between the three of them they must have

a combined age of 200!

"But we still created chances even with the 'old boys' out there.

"Dave had a volley from eight or nine yards which he was disappointed not to score and Thommo was still getting in behind.

"If anything, I think having the older lads out there makes us play better football.

"We can't play direct looking for the pace of Jude and Dougie Rowe, we have to play it into Dave and Matt's feet.

"It means we've got to take more care of the ball and play even better football.

"Dave and Matt haven't got the legs to get about the pitch but, football-wise, they're better than most. They certainly

never lose the ball."

T&E had taken the lead when Nwachukwu – a sports studies with business student at Southampton University – outpaced the Potters' defence to score.

Verwood hit back for 1-1, but T&E raced away with it in the second half with

Rowe capitalising on Robbie Clarke's expert through ball before tucking away a penalty awarded for handball – the former Sholing and Follands man's 23rd and 24th Wessex goals of the season.

Thompson curled in a free-kick to make it 4-1 and Hussey's strike was sandwiched between another two for the visitors who scored through Nathan Saxby (2) and Jack Lovell.

It was Totton's fourth win in six league games, consigning their relegation struggles to the history books.

"Fair play to the lads, they've come good at the right time," smiled Hussey. "We're certainly not involved in any relegation battle now!"

**SEE BACK PAGE FOR TODAY'S NON-LEAGUE RESULTS**



# Non-league Football barrier to progress – Poore

He admitted it was a wrench to leave his local club Cranborne, but felt that making the switch to Verwood now could prove pivotal in his attempts to hold onto the Potters' top young talent.

"It's much better now than at the end of the season," he said. "I can speak to the players and tell them where I want the club to be, talk to them as individuals and get them all to stay."

"That's my aim to start with, to get

back all the players for the start of next season along with one or two additions.

"I'm not going to take anything away from the players that are here because I think they deserve a chance, but we do need to get the team up to around mid-table.

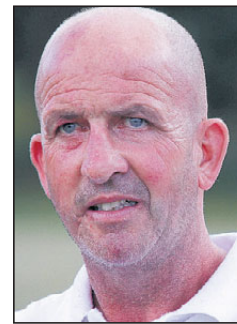
"Looking at the results, they seem to have done well against the big teams yet struggled against the lesser sides.

"We have to get the mentality into them that it is important to raise their

game against everyone, not just when they play the top teams."

Confirming that Poore was the stand-out candidate for the job, Verwood chairman Steve Jefferis said: "We had a lot of interest in the manager's position, but the appointment of Carl was a unanimous decision.

"He is local, knows the club and has good contacts and knowledge of the Wessex League as well as the drive and determination to get the best out of players."



ADIE ARNOLD

## Miller to stand down as Magpies chairman

PAUL Miller is to step down as chairman of Wimborne Town.

The Cuthbury chief is relinquishing the reins at the end of the season due to family and business commitments.

Miller, a Magpies director for the past nine years, will stand down from the board altogether, a year after taking over as chairman from Ken Stewart.

Explaining his decision, he said: "The football club takes up 20 to 30 hours of my working week and, with family and business commitments, I don't have the time to give anymore.

"Even getting to games has become very pressurised, so I would rather step aside.

"If I can't do the job properly, then I would rather not do it at all.

"Wimborne is a very well run club and I have been there as a point of guidance but, to some extent, I felt like I was beginning to fail.

"I felt I couldn't do what was necessary to take the club to the next level."



STEPPING DOWN:  
Paul Miller.

## Doling: It was the right time to quit Town

AS managerial exits go, Stuart Doling's was as low-key as they come, writes WENDY GEE.

Unbeknown to many on the Sydenhams Wessex circuit, the former Portsmouth midfielder has quit his job at Lymington Town.

His right-hand man Matt Dunford has stepped into the breach for the rest of the season.

Doling's departure came almost exactly a year after he had stepped up from the assistant manager's role to replace Andy Leader last April.

Asked his reasons for leaving, Doling said there were "many" but was not prepared to go into detail.

He stated: "I've always been a believer that what goes on in the changing room stays in the changing room.

"It was a massive decision to make and I'm gutted to be leaving.

"Maybe I should have stayed until the end of the season. But I thought that if the club was going to get someone else in, it was the right time to go because it would give the new manager four or five games at the end.

"I've no problems with the club and I will probably stay on as a committee member.

"Things went on, but that needs to stay in the changing room. I always backed my players 100 per cent on and off the pitch and I thought the time was right to go.

"As far as I know, no players have left and Matt Dunford will see them through until the end of the season."

Whether this spells the end for Doling in management remains to be seen, but it's unlikely he will stay away for long.

"Since I left I've had two offers to run things (elsewhere) but at the moment I'm going to take a break and see what happens," he said.

"I thought I did well managing Lymington. We had near enough nothing as a budget and 95 per cent of the time the players were great.

"Until the break-up with the rainy weather, we were top ten and on course for the club's best finish in ten to 12 years.

"I loved doing it, but I couldn't have carried on the way it was.

"I still want the best for Lymington, it's my home town club, and I could never say never about going back.

"I've got my own beliefs about how football should be played and how things should be run and, for the

most part, it worked during the season, so I can't have done too much wrong."

Doling, 41, used his first free weekend last Saturday to take a trip down memory lane to Fratton Park where he played between 1990-95.

"It was nice not working and going back to Pompey, watching a game and seeing a few friends like Andy Awford and Alan Knight," said the former England youth midfielder, who went on to play for Doncaster.

Doling brought his old club some good luck too – a 1-0 win over Hartlepool keeping alive Pompey's hopes of League Two survival.



STUART DOLING



EASTLEIGH'S 90-year old president and founder Derik Brooks cuts the cake to celebrate the official opening of the new Spitfires Supporters' Club room at the Silverlake Stadium.

A group of fans have worked tirelessly for months fitting and decorating the new facility next door to the main clubhouse bar.

The big opening coincided with a fund-raising day for 'Simon Says', a charity which offers child bereavement support.

Fans, meanwhile, have been busy voting for the Spitfires' player-of-the-month for March. On-loan Salisbury striker Ben Wright topped the poll ahead of Jai Reason and Ben Strevens.

Manager Steve Cuss, meanwhile, offered up no excuses as Wimborne's end-of-season woes continued with a 2-1 defeat at struggling Fleet Town last Saturday – their seventh Calor Southern One South & West game without a win.

The only bright note on a bitterly disappointing afternoon for the mid-Magpies was the return of hotshot Mark Gamble after a spell out injured.

Former Winchester City and Bashley striker Gamble replaced Jamie Grose 20 minutes into the second half and Wimborne equalised through Matt Kemble within a minute of him going on.

But Fleet, who had earlier taken the lead when Rob Carr converted ex-Fawley AFC man Aaron Blaxall's cross, hit back with a cracking winner from skipper Ben White.

And the north Hampshire club almost scored again when a strike from substitute Stan Staines rebounded off the inside of the post.

Refusing to blame the Magpies' below-par performance on the fact they had battled out a 4-4 thriller at Tiverton less than 48 hours earlier, Cuss said: "There are no excuses, we just weren't good enough."



# Non-league Football

## City in plea for fresh investment

THERE was great news on the field for Salisbury City last Saturday as Charlie Sheringham's strike earned the Whites their fifth away victory of the Conference Premier season at the expense of ten-man Braintree Town.

But, off it, City have admitted that they desperately need help to offset "an ongoing shortfall in funding" that is threatening to undo all good work achieved by talented, young manager Mikey Harris and his team.

Despite attracting a bumper 2,217 crowd for the recent visit of Kidderminster Harriers as part of the 'Challenge 2000' initiative, attendances at the McEnhill Stadium have averaged below 1,000 this season – nowhere near enough to sustain top-flight non-League football.

And for the club's dream of League Two football to become reality, they would have to provide the Football League with proof of a minimum ten-year tenure on their Raymond McEnhill Stadium – the obstacle being that their current lease is due to expire in 2022.

Lifting the lid on Salisbury's problems, an official statement said: "Sadly the amount of money being invested by the board, with chairman William Harrison-Allan as the major backer, is no longer sustainable within the current funding structure."

"The current board has overcome



WILLIAM HARRISON-ALLAN

major hurdles over the past five years in order to return the club to its current position in the top flight of non-League football.

"When the current shareholders took over in 2009, Salisbury City was ten days away from being wound up by HM Revenue & Customs.

"The board inherited debts of £750,000, which were satisfied through a CVA (company voluntary arrangement). The club went into administration, was fined ten points and began to rebuild in the Southern League.

"Within three seasons the Whites had fought their way back to the Conference Premier and in 2012 reached the third round of the FA Cup for the first time in the club's history.

"This run marked a period of success culminating in this season's league campaign which has seen Mikey Harris's squad compete with, and match, clubs of great stature.

"Despite all of this, Salisbury City continue to operate at a loss.

Continued on facing page

# WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE

Simon Carter

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SPORTS EDITOR

**It was in late December 2011 when new Eastleigh owners Stewart Donald and Neil Fox outlined their ambitious plans for the club.**

In an interview with Wendy Gee that stretched across two pages of the *Sports Pink*, the pair were happy to aim high.

Talk of reaching the Football League was in the air, and crowds of about 3,000 were mentioned.

At the time, it seemed far-fetched.

After all, Eastleigh were mid-table in Conference South, the sixth tier of English football.

Crowds hovered around the 500 mark, only occasionally creeping much higher.

Fast forward to January 5, 2013 and their words seemed even more pie in the sky.

Eastleigh's 3-1 loss at Bromley, their fifth straight league reverse, saw them tumble to second bottom.

Forget the Football League, the Spitfires' attentions were then more about trying to avoid relegation to the Southern League.

It was not what Donald and Fox had anticipated when they sacked ex-Saint Ian Baird the previous September and replaced him with one-time Oxford United and Watford striker Richard Hill.

Fast forward again, though, to April 8, 2014.

Again, Eastleigh were at Bromley.

This time, though, the circumstances were so very different.

A 2-1 win at the Kent club saw Eastleigh stretch their lead at the top of the table to eight points, and they still had a game in hand on second-placed Sutton.

The Spitfires could well have been promoted to the Conference Premier by the time you read this.

If not, they could be up if they beat Dover at the Silverlake Stadium next Tuesday.

At this time, with the 2002/03 Wessex League champions on the brink of a sensational achievement, it is worth taking a step back to December 2011.

This is a small section of the interview Donald and Fox gave to Wendy Gee over two years ago.

**Q** What are your ambitions for Eastleigh?

**A** To bring League football to the club as quickly as possible.

**Q** How quickly might that be achieved?

**A** We're quite ambitious for the football club, but we're also realistic that it won't happen overnight.

It's a big challenge. The whole structure needs to come up both on and off the pitch.

**Q** How will you go about improving

## PERFECT DAY FOR FOXES FAN HILL

SINCE taking on the Eastleigh manager's job in September 2012, Richard Hill has had an all-consuming desire to lead the Spitfires to the promised land of the Conference Premier.

But while the 50-year-old's sole focus has been on delivering the Skril Conference South title to Stoneham Lane, he will never get away from the fact that he still has the blue blood of Leicester City coursing through his veins.

Born in Hinckley, Hill comes from generations of Foxes fans, and had "a good smile" on his face when news filtered through last Saturday that Leicester are on their way back to the Premier League for the first time in a decade.

After beating Sheffield

Wendy Gee

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

Wednesday last Friday, City – managed by ex-Saint Nigel Pearson – had their promotion confirmed on Saturday by QPR's defeat at AFC Bournemouth and Derby's failure to win at Middlesbrough.

Those results neatly coincided with yet another good day at the office for Hill's Eastleigh whose 3-2 home win over Whitehawk took them another giant stride towards non-League's top table.

"I was made up on Saturday when the QPR and Derby results came through and had good smile on my face," said Hill.

"I've supported Leicester ever since my dad took me as a five-year-old and I can still remember the first game I went to.

"I don't know who we played or what the result was, but there were 42,000 packed into the old Filbert Street ground and it was an unbelievable atmosphere.

"I remember getting off the train from Hinckley, getting to the ground and going to a couple of turnstiles which had long queues. We finally got in five minutes before kick-off and were trying to find somewhere to see the game.

"For ten years I never missed a home game until I started playing men's football at 15 for three seasons on the run I followed them home and away.

Continued on page 18



GOING UP: Leicester's players celebrate their promotion to the Premier League.

the structure?

**A** The initial plan was to improve the quality on the pitch and then very quickly improve facilities off it.

**Q** What are the priorities facilitywise?

**A** The club doesn't have a full-time groundsman at the moment and it doesn't have the right capacity.

The corporate experience also needs improvement.

**Q** Are there any ground improvement

plans in the pipeline?

**A** We're looking at the possibility of a bigger stand and terracing.

**Q** What about a new clubhouse?

**A** That's also a possibility, but we don't want to jump into doing anything short-term. Whatever we do here will be for the long-term.

Facilities have got to follow results on the pitch. We'll see how it goes.

It's no good providing terracing for 1,000 people if we want to get 3,000

here eventually.

**Q** How realistic is a 3,000 gate for a club like Eastleigh?

**A** Eastleigh has massive potential. The thing we like is the catchment area. Although Saints are on the doorstep, Eastleigh have 400,000 people living within 20 or 30 minutes of the ground.

There are around 300,000 people in the Southampton area alone.

If the facilities are improved and the



# Non-league Football

## TO LIFT EASTLEIGH GATES?



**UPWARDLY MOBILE:** Bridle's backing has helped Richard Hill, main picture, Eastleigh sign the likes of Stuart Fleetwood, below, and Glen Southam, below inset.



football is of a slightly higher standard, the potential to bring crowds in at Eastleigh is huge.

**Q** But won't the resurgence of Southampton Football Club be a problem?

**A** Not at all. We see Saints' success as a positive. It's uplifting for the whole area and puts football back on the agenda.

If there's more interest in football locally, there's more chance of people

coming to watch Eastleigh.

**Q** So how do you envisage turning average gates of 500-600 into gates of 3,000?

**A** The plan is to invest in the team, invest in the facilities and get people through the door.

Our first target is to get regular attendances of 1,000 and take it from there.

Results will bring the fans in, but there are a number of other things we can do as well.

Bridle have certainly invested in the team. You cannot accuse them of anything but.

Players such as Stuart Fleetwood, Chris Todd, Dean Beckwith and Glen Southam, all possessing good Football League experience, would

not have arrived if the Spitfires were offering paltry wages.

But Bridle's financial backing has yet to result in the attendance increases Donald and Fox had been hoping for.

Despite the team's on-field successes this term, the average league crowd at The Silverlake Stadium has risen from 593 to 619.

That's just an extra 23 fans coming through the gates to watch a team that is top of the table and heading for the biggest achievement of their history.

Bromley and Sutton, Eastleigh's two major title rivals, have seen attendances rise by more than 20 per cent this season.

In contrast, the Spitfires' percentage increase is only 4.38 per cent.

Eastleigh, if they go up, could be playing in front of 3,000 crowds next season.

Not at home games, though.

Not unless the attendances rocket by 500 per cent or so, compared to the 4.38 per cent this term.

Instead, the Spitfires could be visiting former Football League clubs to play in front of several thousand supporters.

There are ten ex-Football League clubs in this season's Conference Premier, though Luton Town will soon be going up as champions.

That still leaves the likes of Grimsby Town (a Championship club as recently as 2002/03), Cambridge United (fifth in the second tier in 1991/92) and Wrexham (four years in the second tier between 1978-1982).

The other ex-Football League clubs are Barnet, Lincoln City, Macclesfield, Kidderminster, Hereford and Aldershot.

In addition to those ten, there are also Chester and Halifax, two clubs born out of the ruins of the former Football League clubs who folded for financial reasons.

Two more will obviously come down from League 2 this season, with Torquay likely to be relegated from the Football League for the second time in seven years.

Exeter City could also go down to the Conference for the second time, while Bristol Rovers, Northampton and Wycombe are also battling to avoid the dreaded drop.

Portsmouth are by no means out of danger yet, though last weekend's 1-0 win at Hartlepool further eased their worries following a 2-1 success at Newport County.

Though Luton, Cambridge and Grimsby are the current top three, the top of the Conference is not wholly populated by former Football League clubs.

Gateshead, beaten by Eastleigh in this season's FA Trophy, went into this weekend in fourth place.

Alfreton Town were recently in the play offs before they

*Continued on page 19*

## Salisbury in cash plea

*From facing page*

"Despite frequent and ongoing initiatives within the community, the gates this season average below 1,000.

"These crowds are simply too low to sustain a club at this level.

"Whilst the team flourishes on the pitch, the board continues to meet problems off it.

"Last year the training pitches adjacent to the stadium were sold by the MOD to Persimmon, with the permission of Wiltshire Council. This meant both City's first-team and around 400 children associated with the club had to look for training facilities elsewhere.

"Another issue arises due to the lease on the Raymond McEnhill Stadium.

"In order to be promoted to League Two, the club must provide the Football League with proof of a minimum ten-year tenure on the stadium. Despite efforts to extend our current lease, it expires in 2022.

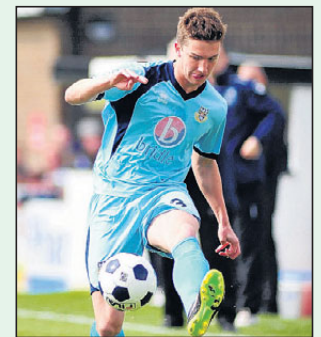
"It is against this backdrop that the board endeavours to keep this club at the level everyone associated with Salisbury City has fought so hard to reach.

"It is, though, simply not sustainable unless new investment is found, along with an increase in sponsorship and commercial activity, plus of course larger crowds."

AFC Wimbledon loanee Sheringham was on the scoresheet again on Tuesday, along with ex-Saint Jamie White, as Salisbury came away 2-0 winners from Hyde.

It's the first time they have achieved back-to-back away wins this season.

The result put Whites in ninth, four points off the play-off places.



**ALEX LACEY**

## Lacey deal

FORMER Eastleigh loanee Alex Lacey has signed a new two-year contract with Skril Conference Premier champions-elect Luton Town.

The 20-year-old has made 19 appearances for the Football League-bound Hatters this season and scored his first senior goal in a 4-0 win at Woking in September.

Defender Lacey was instrumental in turning Eastleigh's 2012/13 season around after joining them on loan in January last year.

Along with permanent signings Chris Todd and Dean Beckwith, he helped iron out the Spitfires' rear-guard problems as Richard Hill's men made a late surge to the Skril Conference South play-offs.

Lacey made his first Town appearance in a 0-0 FA Trophy draw against Welling in December 2010 and has since enjoyed loan spells at Thurrock and Cambridge City, as well as Eastleigh.

**TODAY'S NON-LEAGUE ACTION - TURN BACK TO PAGE 11**



## Perfect day for boss Hill

From page 16

"I don't get to see them that often now because, obviously, I've got commitments of my own.

"But Leicester's one of those places that if you were born there, you support the club. Both my granddads were Leicester fans along with my dad, my cousins and my mates.

"Someone once asked my two boys why they support Leicester City and my eldest said: 'I've never had a choice!'

"What a lot of people don't realise is that Leicester City are a massive football club.

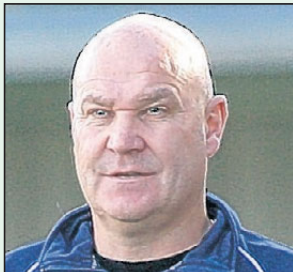
"They've never quite had the resources to make it right to the top and I'm not saying they'll win the Premier League or even finish top six, but there's no reason they can't be like a Stoke City and perhaps even an Everton in a few years' time.

"Them getting promoted is fantastic for the city."

One of Hill's proudest achievements was getting signed on by Leicester as a teenager and playing for their reserves.

The late, great Jock Wallace was Foxes' manager at the time and, although Hill never made it to the first team, he has nothing but fond memories of the wily Scot who he describes as "an amazing man who put people right in their place."

Hill said: "I remember sitting with Jock Wallace and the youth team coach on the day I signed.



RICHARD HILL

"Jock spoke for 20 minutes and wrapped the meeting up by saying he'd pay me £70 (wages) that season and £90 the following season, either take it or leave it.

"If not, then goodbye and good luck for the rest of my career.

"I signed and it was such a proud day for me, my dad and my grandparents."

With a CV that includes right-hand man to John Gregory at Wycombe and QPR and Brian Little at Aston Villa, it's not beyond the realms of possibility that Oxfordshire-based Hill could be managing a Football League club in years to come – maybe even with Eastleigh.

But would he ever take the Leicester job should his beloved Foxes come calling?

"That would never happen," he said. "But even if it did, I don't know if I would.

"John Gregory once said to me that I could never, ever work for Leicester because I'm too close to them and too involved.

"If I worked for Leicester and there was a parting of the ways with animosity, I might end up losing what I feel for the club."

## Non-league Football



# FOOTBALL RE-BIRTH

### LEE Peacock is moving into the second phase of his football life.

He is already relishing it far more than the first, a fact brought home to him by something of a recent personal epiphany, writes PAUL McNAMARA.

"I bumped into a guy I used to play with at Carlisle United, Allan Smart. We were talking old times, and football specifically," he recalled.

"He had a similar career to me and he loved it, enjoyed every minute of it.

"I told him I hated playing. I loved training. I loved it all up until I was about 17, playing in the youth team and reserves.

"I got in the first-team (at Carlisle) when I was 16 and, being thrown in as a kid, there wasn't any real learning curve.

"I was just dropped in from youth football and the reserves where you can find your feet a little bit.

"You can find what you're good at and what does and doesn't work for you. I was thrown into an environment where I was told 'that's right, that's wrong. Do that, don't do that'.

"That was it, every single week.

"For some people that's OK. For me, and how I was, I couldn't adapt that well.

"The player I was on the training pitch was completely different to who I was in a game.

"I'd do things on the training ground that I'd never do on the pitch.

"You're out there with thousands of potential critics watching, and the fear takes over.

"You just do the easy thing, rather than trying what you know you're capable of."

During a 16-year playing career, which took in stays at seven different Football League clubs, Peacock estimates he watched approximately 12 matches.

He is a man transformed.

"Even World Cups, I just didn't watch them," he remarked.

"Towards the end (of his career) I started to have a little bit more interest, but it wasn't until I stepped over the line in the last couple of years that I changed – to the extent that my missus says what a pain in the a\*\*\* I am watching football all the time.

"I try to watch

## Eastleigh youth role helps Lee rekindle love for the game

it in a different way now.

"I get a real enjoyment from it. I feel like I've missed it for 20 years.

I'm so eager to learn now. I learn something every game.

"Watching matches from the top level, right through to the bottom, you can always pick things out.

"I'll even watch the Football League goals on television and study the set-pieces.

"How was that goal scored? How did he lose his marker? I'll rewind and have a look again.

"You begin to piece things together, understanding what will work for you and your players.

"I enjoy trying to figure that out.

"The game has changed a lot.

"Being in the football environment you take on board what you need to do, and what is asked of any manager.

"Seeing the game in the way I do now, I can understand how I could have been a different player."

Now the 'head of youth and development' at Eastleigh, Peacock can

recognise, in some of the club's current promotion chasing squad, a lust for playing that he simply could never muster.

"I refused to express myself on the pitch," he said.

"I'd shut down and be tense and tight.

"I just never, ever enjoyed playing.

"I played at the old Wembley, the Millennium Stadium, at however many great stadiums in front of thousands of people, and not once did I walk out and think 'I can't wait for today'.

"During a game, if things are going well, you can get a certain amount of enjoyment.

"But, some people buzz off the 90 minutes. Players here like Suvs (Glen Southam) they really buzz off the 90 minutes.

"I could

PARK SCRATCHINGS - SEE PAGES 30-31



# Non-league Football

## OF LEE PEACOCK



never get myself up like that. I'd be tanking down Red Bull to get 'hyper' for games.

Today, no artificial boost is required to set Peacock enthusing about his coaching re-birth.

The idea of staying in the game first took root during a 16-month spell at Grimsby Town, the club Peacock joined from Swindon Town early in 2010.

"I'd finally worked under enough people and, with my managers there at the time, I thought 'These guys are getting paid for this'.

"I totally disagreed with what they were doing, their tactics and their approach to man-management.

"I thought 'If these guys are getting paid for doing it, I might have a chance'.

"People had suggested before that I do my badges, but I just wasn't interested. I didn't like football.

"When I decided to start (his coaching qualifications) I did the initial course through the PFA and then, later, began getting some coaching hours here (at Eastleigh).

It was at Swindon that the versatile former Manchester City player worked under two men whose leadership remains a source for inspiration to this day.

Ex-Chelsea and Saints midfielder Dennis Wise and current Sunderland boss Gus Poyet were at the County Ground helm, at the outset of a season in which the Wiltshire club was seeking to bounce back after being relegated into League Two.

"We were, at best, a mid-table team.

"But their man-management, their motivational skills and the way they got us



**TROPHY JOY:** Lee Peacock, left, and Liam Rosenior after scoring the goals that won Bristol City the 2003 Autoglass Trophy.

together as a unit got us promoted.

"They got us playing and believing in ourselves and the guys beside us.

"We had no more than 20 pros but we nearly all stayed fit right the way through.

"Even in pre-season, when they asked us to run, some players would think 'Why? It's easy for you to say'.

"But then Dennis Wise was the first one off, gone, he'd beat everybody. "Then the football, Dennis could still play but Gus Poyet ... wow. He was phenomenal, so, so good.

"You can take instructions from people like that. They lead by doing.

"A lot happened to ensure that they got you playing for them. They really helped the players out.

"They made sure we had good food after training.

"Wisey dug his heels in to get us bonuses, so they really got you playing for them.

"Under those two, I had probably my favourite ever season (2006/2007). I was living in Portsmouth at the time, and I couldn't wait to get into training every day.

"Again, I couldn't get up for the games, but everything else was enjoyable.

"I'd just turned 30, and was thinking that maybe it would be downhill from there, but that period really kicked me on.

"I got the club's and fans' Player-of-the-Year awards, as well as getting the League Two fans' Player-of-the-Year award.

"It was the most amazing year."

*Continued on page 20*

## What more can done to lift gates?

*From page 17*

had three points deducted and dropped out of the top five.

The Derbyshire club have managed to sustain a play off challenge on an average league crowd of 780, while Gateshead are averaging even less – just 730.

Eastleigh will certainly be confident of averaging more than that in the elite level of English non-league football next term.

Gateshead and Alfreton have also shown that it is possible for 'traditional' non-league clubs to compete with former Football League clubs.

That is good news for Eastleigh, but the owners will be desperate to ensure that bigger attendances help pay for new players on higher salaries.

As Salisbury City are finding out (see story in this weekend's *Sports Pink*), just being members of the elite non league division doesn't pay all the bills.

The Wiltshire club are appealing for more financial help after admitting their board can't continue to carry the burden as they have so far.

Despite enjoying a good season of continuous top-half league positions, Salisbury's average league attendance has only recently crept over 1,000.

And it would be quite a bit lower but for recent crowds of 2,633 (v Luton) and 2,217 (v Kidderminster).

Prior to the Luton game, Salisbury's previous home league crowd had been just 626.

### AVERAGE ATTENDANCES 2013/14 CONFERENCE PREMIER

Luton Town	6986
Grimsby Town	3462
Cambridge United	3096
Wrexham	3051
Lincoln City	2342
Chester (P)	2215
Kidderminster Harriers	2041
Aldershot Town (R)	1843
Barnet (R)	1724
Hereford United	1724
FC Halifax (P)	1549
Macclesfield Town	1490
Woking	1471
Nuneaton	1251
Dartford	1249
Forest Green Rovers	1168
Salisbury City	1004
Southport	997
Braintree Town	979
Tamworth	979
Alfreton Town	780
Welling United	750
Gateshead	730
Hyde FC	615

### CONFERENCE SOUTH

Ebbfleet United	867
Dover Athletic	666
Bromley	648
Sutton United	640
Eastleigh	619
Bath City	603
Chelmsford City	599
Eastbourne Borough	546
Havant and Waterlooville	529
Gosport Borough	440
Dorchester	397
Tonbridge Angels	397
Farnborough	392
Bishops Cleeve	365
Basingstoke Town	335
Maidenhead United	292
Staines Town	258
Weston-S-Mare	248
Concord Rangers	242
Whitehawk	191
Boreham Wood	189
Hayes & Yeading Utd	139

**COLLEGES FOOTBALL - SEE PAGE 35**



# Non-league Football

## Players told: Prove you want to stay

BASINGSTOKE Town's under-performing players have been challenged to use their final games of the season to prove they want to remain at the north Hampshire club.

Town, who visit champions elect Eastleigh on Good Friday (3pm), have won just one of their last nine games – a run that has seen them slip out of play-off contention.

They have probably amassed enough points to ensure they cannot be relegated from the Conference South, but manager Jason Bristow insists the pressure is not off.

"If you look at recent games, then you would say the squad we have is not good enough," he said.

"The players have six games (starting at home to Bishop's Cleeve today) to show the club they want to be here next season.

"We are probably safe, but the pressure is not off because we want to finish as high as we can.

"We are ticking the games off, but we do not want to end the season with a bad run.

"We have got to be better than we have been in the last couple of games.

Despite a second disappointing season in a row, Bristow continues to have the backing of most Town



JASON BRISTOW

supporters.

It is likely he will remain at the helm next season, but murmurings of discontent are beginning to surface and Bristow admits he is under pressure.

"I put myself under pressure, football is a results business and our results have not been good enough," he confessed. "It's been very frustrating of late and nobody feels it more than me.

"Hours of work go into preparing for games and there are plenty of sleepless nights.

"When things don't go right you always question if you could have done things differently."

Back in August, Basingstoke put Eastleigh to the sword 2-0 at the Camrose Ground – one of only six league defeats suffered by Richard Hill's men all season.

Next Friday's trip to the Silverlake is preceded by another Hampshire derby at FA Trophy finalists Gosport on Tuesday.

Basingstoke have already triumphed at Gosport's Privett Park home this season in the semi-final of the Hampshire FA Senior Cup.

They will face Havant & Waterlooville in the final at Fratton Park on Monday, May 12 (7.30pm)

# PEACOCK FINDS

from page 19

Not wanting to uproot his Portsmouth based family after leaving Grimsby at the end of 2010/2011, Peacock agreed to link up with Eastleigh's Conference South rivals, Havant & Waterlooville.

It was a decision that, inadvertently, pushed him further down the path that he is now following.

"Being there kicked me on even more to wanting to be a manager," he recalled.

"I saw things that certain people do and I was thinking, not 'I can do better', but 'I've got a chance (at being a good manager) myself'.

"What the players were saying and needing was not what was being provided.

"You have to adapt as a coach. You have to find ways to utilise the strengths of the players.

"You have to change as well to get the best out of a team.

"You can't just say 'I'm a 4-4-2 man and that's it'. If you have the personnel that suits that, then do it. Find a way to make it work."

"Never the same player" after undergoing an ankle op in 2004 when at Bristol City, and having subsequently been afflicted by back injuries that twice forced him under the knife, Peacock considered himself retired upon leaving Westleigh Park after six months with the Hawks.

Even a call from Shaun Wilkinson, assistant to then Eastleigh manager Ian Baird, sounding out the 'free agent' about his playing availability, did little initially to whet Peacock's appetite.

"I'd retired midway through the season (2011/2012). Shaun Wilkinson called me and said 'Do you fancy coming to Eastleigh?'. At first, I just said 'No. I don't want to play anymore'.

"He eventually persuaded me to come over and train. I'd been sat playing FIFA and watching the Champions League and was just getting a bit of the buzz again.

"I met the lads and trained and absolutely loved it. From there, behind the scenes, they were keen for me to do some coaching.

"After that, I never looked back. I took every hour I could get. Now, I take the under-11s, go out to work in the schools, oversee the under-16s, coach the scholarship players.

"The coaching badges have kept coming and it's just something I've really enjoyed."

While excited by the standard of footballers currently signed to scholarship deals at Eastleigh, Peacock is determined that their development will be a more rounded experience than his own.

"It's totally down to where the club go and what the gaffer (Richard Hill) wants to do.

"We've got lads in our scholarship programme and under-18s who are very good players. Their destiny is in their own hands.

"There are opportunities for these lads. The gaffer is very good in wanting young lads to go and train with the first team.

"We train in the mornings at the same time as the first-team, so if the manager asks for a particular type of player then that is their opportunity to shine.

"We've got a direct line now going from the youth through to the first team.

"The lads who have been up with the 'firsts' this year are only first years, so they've got a whole year's development ahead of them before they finish this education.



INFLUENCE:  
Gus Poyet.



LEADERSHIP  
SKILLS: Dennis  
Wise, right.

"Then we might consider a reserve team but, at the moment, these kids should be playing their scholarship football, and playing for the

under-18s.

"Some of them can be too keen to get into men's football straight away.

"As I found, though, that takes away a part of your learning curve because you're in pressure football. First and foremost, you should prove you're too good for the under-18s and scholarship levels before you jump up.

**MORE NON-LEAGUE IN MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO**



# Non-league Football

# A PERFECT HOME



**PLAYING RETURN:**  
Lee Peacock, right in  
action for Eastleigh.

"I loved youth team football, playing with your mates and against lads of your own age; not against some man mountain who is just going to bust you in the back of the head every time the ball is in the air.

"It's fine to dip your toe into men's football, but you shouldn't overlook what youth football can do for you. The key thing now is that we have a

route to the first team, which the manager has helped with.

"The standard we have in the first years, he is keen to see it progress and help him and the chairman by providing players – and maybe even save them some money."

To see what can be achieved as part of Peacock's set-up, the Spitfires' youngsters need look no fur-

ther than one of their contemporaries.

Jack Masterton made his first team bow when playing 20 minutes of the recent home victory over Dorchester Town.

Seeing the 17-year-old seize his opportunity left Peacock swelling with pride, but he is keen for the player himself to take the plaudits.

"I don't take any credit for it. I recommended that he train with the first team because I can see his potential, but he's done the hard work.

"You just set a platform for them and give them instruction, but you can never know exactly how much of an influence you've had.

"He was a good player when he came (from Southampton at the start of this season).

"I just try to keep his confidence up. If he believes I've helped him I'm happy but, essentially, it's him that's got himself in the first team."

And who could be found on the bench alongside young Masterton on that balmy late March evening? Lee Peacock, brought out of retirement for a second time just days earlier by Hill.

Peacock appeared for the final minutes of a vital fixture at Staines Town, before being included in the match-day squad for the clash with Dorchester and a trip to Hayes & Yeading.

"When the gaffer asked if I could come in I didn't know if he was being serious.

"I know the majority of the lads, and I was never going to upset the dressing room – I'm not trying to earn a contract or anything like that!

"The way I see it, the first team always come first. Whatever I can do, through my role here, to help the first team I'll do it.

"If that's to sit on the bench and yammer away with the lads, or go onto the pitch for four minutes, I'll do it for the sake of the club if it helps.

"The gaffer knew I'd be limited because I've not kicked a ball since Dover (last season's play-off semi-final) and I've done no training, but your instincts are still there.

"I'd do it again. I'd do it next year, and the year after. I'll be in better condition by then because I'm going to work at my fitness again.

"I want to be an active coach who can demonstrate what he expects.

"I'm more than happy to do whatever helps Eastleigh.

"At the moment, everybody's goal at the club should be for the first-team to be promoted.

"If it takes me being on the bench, or driving the bus for the first-team, I'll do whatever I can to help. If the first team is doing well we all get the rewards.

"It helps me with trying to get more scholars in.

"If the club is being successful, and young players like Jack Masterton are getting a chance in the team, then that sparks interest.

"People realise that, through this scholarship, they can go on to become part of a strong team."

When the dust settles on this momentous campaign at Eastleigh, Peacock will be taking himself off to Largs, on the west coast of Scotland, for the next stage of his personal voyage.

It is at the prestigious Scottish FA coaching centre, which counts Jose Mourinho and David Moyes among its illustrious alumni, and where the 37 year-old will study for his UEFA A coaching licence.

Does he hope this journey will eventually lead him into management?

"One hundred per cent, I eventually want to manage. I am prepared to take all the baby steps to get there. I wouldn't be ready now and I enjoy the youth football.

"Where that takes me in the forthcoming years, I don't know, but I'm thoroughly enjoying it now, I really am."

With Peacock's club going from strength-to-strength, Eastleigh's very own renaissance man has found a perfect home.

Follow me on twitter @mcnamara\_sport

## Hards to end City tenure

WINCHESTER City have begun the hunt for a new manager to lead them back into the Southern League.

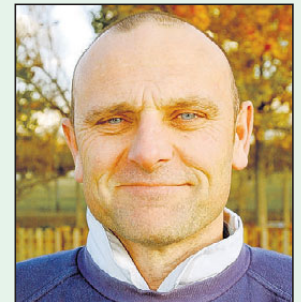
The Sydenhams Premier club have confirmed that Neil Hards will be leaving at the end of the season for personal and family reasons.

Hards, who famously led Winchester to FA Vase glory in 2004, made a surprise return to the Denplan City Ground in late October following the departure of Graham Kemp after just five months in the post.

Portsmouth-based Hards said at the time that he would help out for as long as needed.

His efforts have been much appreciated by director of football Dave Malone and chairman Paul Murray who, exactly a year ago, rode in to save the club from almost certain extinction.

Since then some £30,000 had been pumped into ground improvements which, they hope, will pave the way to delivering Southern Premier Division football to the city in the foreseeable future.



**NEIL HARDS**

The team budget has been cut to allow that work to be done, meaning fourth-placed City have had to forego their promotion dream this term.

But saluting Hards's efforts, Malone said: "He has worked tirelessly with a much reduced budget and with several players elevated from the reserve team.

"Neil has, and always will be, a supporter and friend of WCFC and we will be eternally indebted to him for the contribution he has made to the re-emergence of our club.

"When Hardsy came here, he said he'd help out for as long as he needed to and he's been as good as gold and remains so. But his life's manic, what with work and family, and he'll be finishing at the end of the season. It's as amicable as can be."

The dilemma for Winchester is how to unearth a suitably ambitious replacement who can deliver Sydenhams Premier promotion but on a comparatively modest budget.

The key, Malone believes, is finding someone with a wealth of Wessex connections.

**JUNIOR FOOTBALL - SEE PAGES 32-33**



## Adam Rant



This week's big talking points  
with **Adam Leitch**

# GILES BY DEFAULT?

**YOU** would be tempted to say that Ashley Giles is going to have to be one heck of a talker to bag himself the England coaching job on a full time basis, but he might actually be the only person that wants it right now.

Whoever is eventually named as Andy Flower's successor, the one positive they can take is that things cannot possibly get any worse.

A winter of truly dreadful proportions has flopped from one disaster to the next, as England were humiliated in the Ashes, the limited over series and most recently the Twenty20 World Cup.

And while it's one thing to be humbled by the Aussies, it's quite another to not just get beaten but actually thrashed by the Netherlands.

The whole England set-up just feels rotten right now. Rotten in the sense that a piece of wood can rot from the inside out and just disintegrate in front of you.

The question is whether the wood is beyond repair and just needs to be replaced wholesale?

Right now England don't have a coach, we don't know who opens the batting, who comes in in the middle order, who keeps wicket, who replaces Graeme Swann in the spin department – and that's

**'Even the 1990s feel like glory years in comparison'**

before we even delve even remotely deep.

What we do know is that this cannot be allowed to continue.

Adam Rant grew up on the England sides of the 1990s. That was depressing, and you would have thought enough to have put you off cricket for life.

But it seemed we got beyond all that.

All right, players and teams come and go, you always accept that, but it felt as if the system was right.

The Australians went through a period where potentially the best side in the history of cricket started to retire and they faltered.

It was a fallow period for them, but they had the right system in place and they have come through it in some style.

What is required is some strong leadership.

In Michael Clarke they found the right captain, in Darren Lehmann



**AGONY:** Jay Rodriguez after sustaining his knee injury

## Good luck, Jay, on path to recovery

**WHAT** a shattering week for Jay Rodriguez and Saints.

While the club itself don't have much to play for in these final few weeks of the campaign, Rodriguez was one of a number of individuals who very much do with the World Cup on the horizon.

Whether Rodriguez would have quite made the 23-man squad for Brazil is up for debate. He was probably in the category of being a very live outsider for a place on the plane.

His ACL injury at Manchester City though certainly rules him out.

In truth, even if the surgery is successful he probably won't make a Saints first team return until the end of the year.

Adam Rant has seen several ACL recoveries at very close quarters and knows all too well the problems involved. You are so lucky if there are no further problems down the line.

Hopefully Rodriguez can be one of those, but even so you can never be entirely sure you will be the same player on your return. Those natural jinking runs, that pace, it's hard to get it all back.

Rodriguez is young and determined, which plays in his favour. He's also plenty talented enough to slightly reinvent himself if needs be.

To be without him will be a blow for Saints as well.

To make a comeback mid-season is hard after a serious injury, and so Saints cannot be totally certain what kind of role one of their leading lights will play in the next campaign.

It was such an innocuous moment as Rodriguez jumped to control that ball at the Etihad Stadium, but it's got significant consequences.

Hopefully Rodriguez has a successful operation, a six-month rehab, returns to the Saints team and gets back to full speed as quickly as possible and, eventually, goes to the next World Cup.

All the parties involved deserve a happy ending to this story.

they appointed the right coach. Giles, pictured right, undoubtedly is hungry for the job but his record in the role he currently has is pretty rubbish.

To hear him talk of the last World Cup game against the Netherlands game as a 'banana skin' set the wrong tone. England v Netherlands a banana skin? Come on, it should be a



balls out display showing them what top level cricket is all about – that tentative nature of that comment reflected in the performance.

And as for Giles and Stuart Broad saying the players were complacent – what on earth have they got to be complacent about? You need to

be doing well to get complacent in sport, and if they seriously were complacent their standards are so skewed they should be dropped en masse now and never again considered for selection.

Giles might get the job because he's a guy who will live by the ECB's decision to bin off Kevin Pietersen, which will put off many other top world coaches, not only for the fact they cannot select one of the best batsmen in world cricket but that those sort of decisions can be foisted upon them.

Whether Giles is right man for the job or not, it may be that he is the only viable option. What a sorry state of affairs.

How did it come to this? Even the 1990s feel like glory years in comparison.

There is so much to sort out and some big decisions to be made.

They need to be bold and they need to be brave. More than anything they need to come soon, so at least we can look to the future with optimism rather than dwelling on this total shambles of a winter.



## Getting shirty...

ADAM Rant rarely dishes out much consumer advice, but to anybody complaining about the price of the new England shirt the answer is simple – don't buy it.

The Ranty one does have some sympathy for parents of children who might want it ahead of the World Cup, but every shop in the country will be selling a nice range of England related T-shirts and other clothing ahead of the tournament at a fraction of the price.

## Grow up

For adults who are complaining about being asked to spend £90 for an exact replica top of the ones the players will wear the answer is simple – grow up.

If you think it's a rip off, then, to you at least, it is, so don't buy it.

Football shirts rarely look good on grown men anyway, so save the £90 and spend it on something more worthwhile.



# Four-page pullout celebrating Sholing's FA Vase heroes ...

**ALL SMILES:** Sholing manager Dave Diaper, left, and Byron Mason after reaching the FA Vase final.

## Sholing boss feeling strain

**Wendy Gee**

wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk

**NON-LEAGUE REPORTER**

**DAVE Diaper reckons Sholing's historic FA Vase run has put years on him.**

After 14 seasons at Portsmouth Road, the Boatmen's inspirational chairman-cum-manager will proudly lead his side out at Wembley Stadium on Saturday, May 10 against West Auckland Town.

And much as he has tried to deflect all the credit on to his players, there is no escaping the fact that, without Diaper's tireless hard work and guidance, Sholing's 'March to the Arch' would never have turned from dream to reality.

Catching his breath after the Boatmen's historic 4-2 second-leg victory at Eastbourne United last Saturday, which booked their ticket to Wembley 6-4 on aggregate, Diaper admitted: "It's been flat out for the last three or four weeks.

"It's been constant, in your face, on and off the field.

"But, don't get me wrong, it's a great problem to have and I'll miss it when it's not there.

"We've had so many people from the Wessex League and friends and players from other clubs tweeting and wishing us well. It's been absolutely tremendous.

"But the whole thing's been really tiring too.

"I was speaking to Eastbourne's manager (Simon Rowland) and he's only 39 and he reckons he's aged ten years because there's been so much to do.

"Players don't realise sometimes what goes into management.

"I haven't had a year off from football since I was 19 and 40 years without a break is a very long time!"

Having been held 2-2 on home territory, Sholing had left themselves with it all to do in the return leg in East Sussex.

*Continued on page 26*

# DIAPER: VASE RUN HAS PUT YEARS ON ME!

**CELEBRATING SHOLING'S WEMBLEY WONDERS**

The Daily Echo and Sports Pink will be bringing you all the best stories as the countdown builds to the FA Vase final ...





# Pictorial tribute to Sholing's FA Vase semi-final heroes ...



Order no: 18264450



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*Pictorial tribute to Sholing's FA Vase semi-final heroes ...*

**MARCH TO THE ARCH**



Order no: 18264474



Order no: 18264446



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Order no: 18261538



Order no: 18264428



Order no: 18261552



# Vase run has put years on me – Diaps

From page 23

They tore out of the traps to go in 3-0 up at half-time through an own goal, Mike Carter and skipper Byron Mason, but the tie was far from over.

Diaper was then forced to live on his nerves as United fought back to 3-2 before substitute Nick Watts relieved the tension with a triumphant late settler.

Eastbourne's comeback didn't surprise Diaper. He said: "Every team has its 20 minutes and give them credit for that. It was nothing we didn't do, it was what they did and they're good at what they do. But our lads showed great character to come through it."

"I reminded them at half-time that we were once 4-0 up in a Wessex League Cup tie against Winchester City and they hit back and we eventually won 5-4, so it does happen."

"I told the lads that if we can score three goals, then so can Eastbourne, but I didn't want to be proved right!"

Diaper, though, admits it might have been a different story had Ryan McBride – Eastbourne's first-leg dangerman – been playing.

United did a good job concealing the fact that the powerful striker was suspended for the return match – a fact that only came to light when Sholing turned up at The Oval.

"When I looked at their team sheet and saw McBride's name missing I thought that someone was looking down on me!" smiled Diaper.

"On this pitch I think he could have been unbeatable. You can't beat him in the air and he would have made a big difference to them flicking the ball on."

"I hadn't realised he was suspended so it came as a real surprise to me."

"But their manager also said I caught him out a bit by making the changes I did."

"He thought I'd play Brewy (Kev Brewster) at right-back rather than Tyrone Bowers and he didn't expect me to push Byron Mason up front."

Diaper's reshuffle meant no place in the starting line-up for Ashley Jarvis whose thriving partnership with goal machine Lee Wort has been instrumental in Sholing's success this season.

## Sanity

The manager admitted afterwards: "I felt really sorry for Ash. His workrate's been phenomenal and he doesn't get the accolades he deserves."

"But I just felt we needed to keep Eastbourne's two big centre-halves occupied."

"When I looked at the bench and saw Ash sitting there I was questioning my own sanity but we just needed that extra bit of strength up top."



**ABOVE:** Sholing fans celebrate Nick Watts' goal which sealed semi-final victory over Eastbourne United.

Order no: 18264433

**RIGHT:** Nick Watts scores Sholing fourth goal at Eastbourne United to secure a place in the FA Vase final.

Order no: 18264418



# IT'S THE BEST FEELING IN THE WORLD – DIXON

**WEST Auckland Town manager Peter Dixon called his side's progress to The Vase final "the best feeling in the world".**

West beat St Andrews after coming from a goal down thanks to a Steven Richardson double.

The County Durham club reached the final in 2012 but lost to Northern League rivals Dunston UTS at Wembley.

Dixon is desperate to make amends this year against Sholing.

He said: "I'll tell the players to enjoy and savour every second of it."

"It is an amazing achievement to make it to Wembley twice in three years."

"I'm excited. The last time we made it I didn't know what to expect and the occasion felt so surreal."

"But now I do know and it is one of the best feelings in the world."

Two years ago Dixon lost 2-

0 to Northern League rivals Dunston and feared history was repeating itself in last Saturday's semi final. In the 2012 final captain Mattie Moffat played with a fractured cheekbone in the defeat.

Against St Andrews he had to be substituted in the first half after suffering a similar injury.

Things went from bad to worse when West Auckland went behind to a stunning volley by England schoolboy Brady Hickey on 63 minutes.

But Richardson, who came on for Moffat, struck twice in eight minutes to give his club a second shot at Wembley glory.

"I thought it was all happening again with our player injured and us los-

ing," he said.

"But we are comeback specialists and sometimes we need someone to hit us in the face to get us going and that is what happened."

"Huge credit to Steven Richardson – sometimes he has been in and out of the team but he played his part today coming on for Moffat and scoring the goals."

Richardson is through to the Vase final for the second season running.

He was an unused sub for Spennymoor Town when they beat Tunbridge Wells in front of a crowd of just under 17,000 at the national stadium last season.

Dixon made sure he didn't forget West's beaten opponents St Andrews in the aftermath of last weekend's final whistle.

He continued: "I made sure I shook every players' hand because, as much as I enjoyed myself, half of my mind was with them."

"I know what it is like because I've been in their situation."

"I've lost an even bigger game than today because of the final at Wembley two years ago."



## What they tweeted ...

**Sholing boss Dave Diaper:** Let the people of Southampton rejoice we have a team at Wembley! Come and support us on May 10 at Wembley red and white

**Boatmen's skipper Byron (Bryzy) Mason:** I love my team

**Sholing centre-back Lee (Brighty) Bright:** All good teams are built on great defensive partnerships. Me and pistol (Pete Castle) will rival anyone. #partners4life

**Newport IoW's former Sholing midfielder Charlie Smeeton:** Just wanted to congratulate you boys getting to Wembley!! Smeets is an Ultra for one day only!!

**Mike Carter, Sholing defender/midfielder:** We're on our way to town and were gonna go mental....Going to Wembley with my brothers – don't mind if I do!

**Hungerford's ex-Sholing and Gosport midfielder Dean Stow:** Two of my former clubs at Wembley in the same year. Well done both

**Gosport Borough's all-time leading scorer Justin Bennet:** Go and enjoy your day out at Wembley @sholingfc #buzzing for you boys!

**Ryan Gosney, Folland Sports goal-keeper:** Just a tad jealous lads #Wembley well done

**Sholing midfielder/full back Tyrone Bowers:** Still can't believe me and the boys are going to Wembley #uptheboatmen#wembley

**Boatmen's winger Marvin McLean:** Buzzing...did somebody say Wembley??????

**Pedro 'Pele' Monteiro, Havant & Waterlooville's former Saints defender:** Big congratulations to @sholingfc great season they are having

**Fellow Vase finalists West Auckland Town:** @wembleystadium @sholingfc we're counting down the days already!



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# Saints Spotlight

## SUNDAY FOOTBALL

### Green in the pink

CHARTWELL Green fought back from 2-1 down at half-time to win 3-2 at home against AFC Bursledon in Junior 1 of the City of Southampton Sunday League.

Tony Sullivan, Luke Bowyer and Rich Warner all scored for Chartwell, while Sean Nutbeen and Lewis Crook netted for Bursledon.

Glen thumped AFC Riverside 5-0 in a game that was over effectively over at half-time with Glen leading 3-0. A Jake Voller hat-trick combined with Neil Darby and Richard Watkins goals made it a day to forget for Riverside. Glen remain top of the table having played four more games than second placed AFC Bursledon, who are only four points behind. Meanwhile AFC Riverside remain bottom.

Obelisk took a comfortable win at home against Sky Blues. Obelisk scored twice either side of the break, Mitch Turley, Lee Ryves (2) and Sam Wyeth all getting the goals, whereas Sky Blues could only manage one second half goal from Ashley Leach. Sky Blues remain level on points with bottom-placed AFC Riverside, but have played two less.

In Junior 3, AFC Bishopstoke cruised to a comfortable 3-0 win over Bridge Reserves with Ryan Young, Jimmy Bright and Justin Beckett on targets.

Warren Applegate scored four goals as Boyatt Wood Wanderers piled more misery on bottom-placed Royal Marine. Dan Harkett-Burgess scored twice in the 6-2 win.

Second from bottom King George pulled off a surprise by thrashing AFC Velmore 12-1. David North (5), Mark Phillips (4), Nathan Rose, Paul Abrahams and Terry Osborne all contributed in a game that was 6-0 and over at half time. Sean Ralph pulled a goal back for Velmore, who remain five points ahead of King George, but have played four games less.

Landguard Rovers strengthened their position at the top of the table with a 6-0 defeat of Chartwell Green Reserves. The win now puts them 11 points in front of Titans, who can only recoup nine points from their three games in hand. Rose Jones (3) and Charlie Neocleous were both on target for Rovers.

# SAINTS CLIP WINGS

**SAINTS were this weekend attempting to extend their impressive home record against relegation haunted Cardiff City.**

The Welsh club went into the game at St Mary's having only won one of their 17 post-war league visits to Southampton.

That came back in 1962.

Here, **OLLIE MASKELL** looks back at all the post-war league games at The Dell and St Mary's.

**September 17, 1947  
Saints 2 Cardiff 2**

Just nine days after crashing 5-1 at Ninian Park, Saints took the lead against the Bluebirds before hitting back for a point.

Jack Bradley fired Saints in front with his eighth goal in his first 11 Second Division games of the season.

It was his last as well, as a few weeks later he joined Bolton for £8,000.

Cardiff hit back to take the lead before Eric Day, pictured above, levelled 17 minutes from time.



**January 1 1949  
Saints 2 Cardiff 0**

Saints moved to the top of the second tier after Augie Scott headed them in front after just ten minutes.

Charlie Wayman, who ended the season with 32 league goals in 37 matches, secured the points midway through the second half.

**March 4 1950  
Saints 3 Cardiff 1**

Jimmy McGowan scored on his Saints debut in a comfortable home win after Eric Day opened the scoring on 11 minutes.

Ted Bates completed Saints' scoring with one of his 15 league goals – a tally only eclipsed among his teammates by Charlie Wayman's 24.

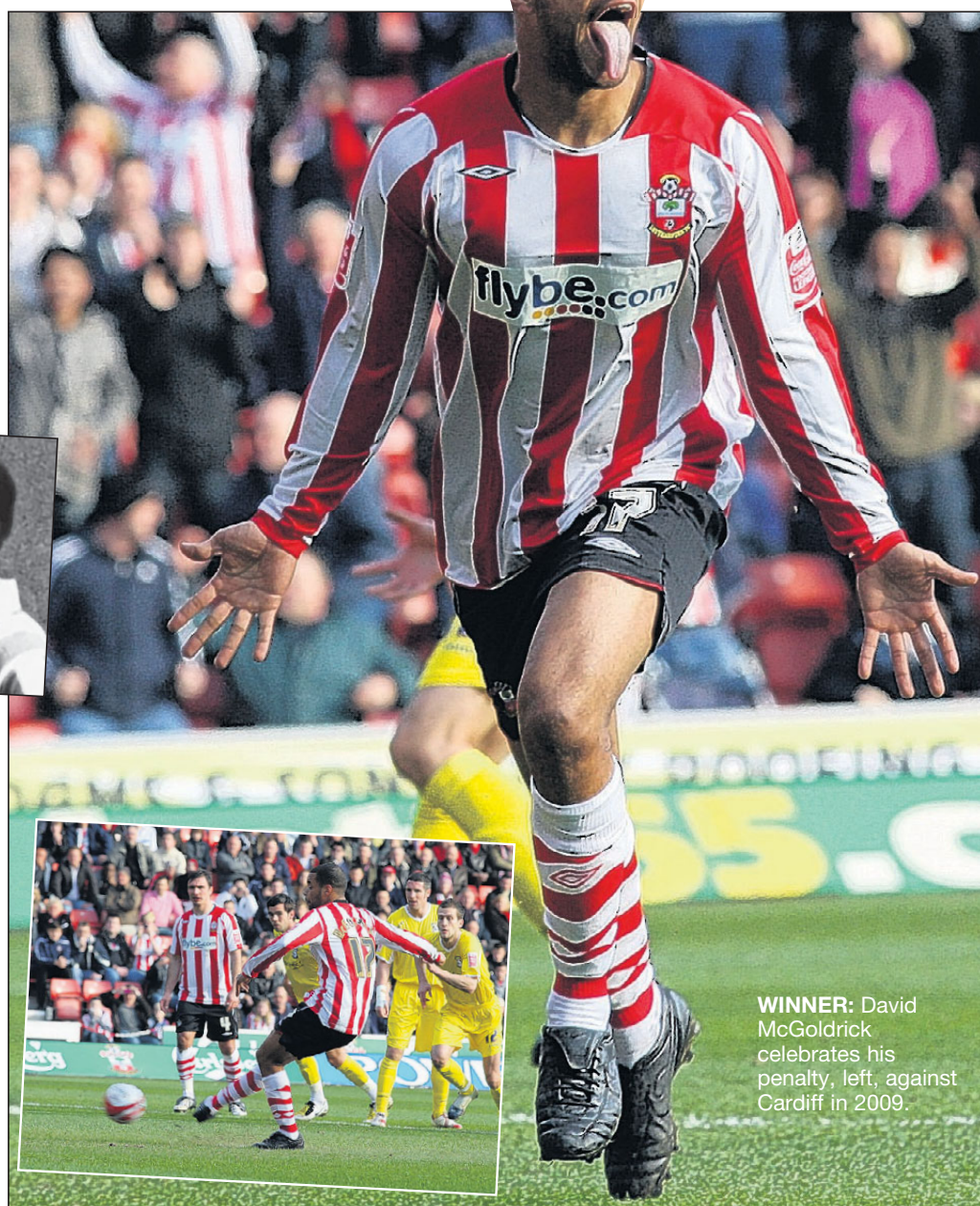
**March 3, 1951  
Saints 1 Cardiff 1**

Jack Edwards put Saints ahead from the penalty spot, but then saw a second spot-kick hit the bar prior to Cardiff's leveller.

**September 22 1951  
Saints 1 Cardiff 1**

Henry Horton hit a second-half leveller against a Bluebirds side who claimed automatic promotion to the First Division as runners-up.

**October 31 1962  
Saints 3 Cardiff 5**



**WINNER:** David McGoldrick celebrates his penalty, left, against Cardiff in 2009.

A thrilling encounter saw George O'Brien grab his first of a hat-trick after just a minute.

O'Brien put Saints 2-0 up before the visitors hit back to take the lead.

O'Brien levelled but Cardiff, thanks to a brace from Ivor Allchurch, ran out winners.

**December 7 1963  
Saints 3 Cardiff 2**

Saints hit back from conceding first with all five goals coming in the second half.

Terry Paine levelled from the spot before George Kirby put Saints ahead.

After Cardiff had levelled, Ian White claimed a 79th minute decider.

Saints came from 0-2 down to win 4-2 at Ninian Park later in the season.

**February 13 1965  
Saints 1 Cardiff 1**

George O'Brien fired Saints into an early lead before Ivor Allchurch levelled shortly into the second half.

**April 20 1966  
Saints 3 Cardiff 2**

Terry Paine scored twice against

the Bluebirds for the second time that season as Ted Bates' men took another step towards promotion to the top flight.

Norman Dean also scored as Saints completed the double, following their 5-3 win at Ninian Park two days after Christmas.

**April 22 1975  
Saints 2 Cardiff 0**

A miserable trip to The Dell for Cardiff as goals from Mick Channon and Gerry O'Brien condemn them to relegation to the third division.

**April 11 1977**

**DON'T MISS LAWRIE MCMENEMY'S EXCLUSIVE**



# Saints Spotlight

# OF THE BLUEBIRDS

**BALL WATCHING:** Mick Channon, second left, scores against Cardiff in 1975.



**FLASHBACK:** Action from Saints v Cardiff in 1947.

## Saints 3 Cardiff 2

Back in the second tier after a one-season absence, Cardiff slipped 3-0 down at The Dell to goals from Mick Channon (2) and Ted MacDougall. The Bluebirds replied twice late on.

## December 26 1977

### Saints 3 Cardiff 1

Ted MacDougall put Saints on their way to victory with a first minute strike.

Alan Ball and Phil Boyer put Lawrie McMenemy's men 3-0 up.

## April 1 2006

### Saints 3 Cardiff 2

Ricardo Fuller grabbed a second half double to ease Saints' relegation fears.

Claus Lundekvam scored only his second ever Saints goal – ironically against his former Saints boss Dave Jones (who had been in charge of Wolves when Lundekvam had scored his first Saints goal in 2004!).

Cameron Jerome levelled before Fuller netted in the 70th and 75th minutes.

Darren Purse gave Saints a few nervous moments late on.

## March 13 2007

### Saints 2 Cardiff 2

Play-off chasing Saints were denied a win when Peter Whittingham grabbed a 85th minute equaliser.

Chris Baird and Bradley Wright-Phillips had given Saints a 2-0 first half cushion, with Steven Thompson giving Cardiff hope just after the hour mark.

## October 21 2007

### Saints 1 Cardiff 0

An early first-half strike from Stern John gave Saints the points.

## February 28 2009

### Saints 1 Cardiff 0

David McGoldrick's 11th minute penalty was the only goal and a rare victory for Mark Wotte's Saints who were relegated to the third division at the end of the season.

## January 31 2012

### Saints 1 Cardiff 1

A Rickie Lambert penalty was enough to keep Saints top of the Championship table.

Cardiff had taken the lead midway through the first half through Craig Conway, but were left still waiting for their first league win in Southampton since 1962.

## SUNDAY FOOTBALL

# Roll Call title push

ROLL Call continued their charge for the top of Junior 4 of the City of Southampton Sunday League, scraping past Carnival UK 4-3 away from home.

Being 3-0 up at half time Roll Call looked comfortable, but goals from Gary Crook (2) and Dan Jones made it a tighter finish than most first thought. Roll Call remain four points behind Itchen Saints with a game in hand.

An impressive second half display helped Hedge End Rangers dispatch Eastpoint 4-1 in a game that was tied 1-1 at half time. James Scott (2), Josh Porter and Daniel Cottrell netted for the winners. Billy Kelly replied.

Itchen Saints tightened their grip on the top of the table as they dismantled third-placed AFC Gulf

Western 9-1. Coby Wilson (2), Jamie Wilson (2), pictured, Jamie Martin,

Lewis Fear, Stu Fudge and David Coak helped move the Saints into a four-point lead at the top of the table.

Sherfield English Reserves remain bottom of the table, despite scoring twice against Durley. Lee Bungay, Joe Taylor, Matt Darling and Owen Williams (2) placed five past Sherfield who had two of their own thanks to an Ashley McGimpsey double.

AFC Marchwood were left shocked at home after Burridge AFC came away having beaten the title contenders 5-0 in Junior 5.

AFC Marchwood would have gone level on points with top-placed Test Valley Spartans with a game in hand had they won, but Dave Middleton, Ricky Sharp, Carlos Dorado and Chico Malik-Diop put a spanner in the works and now Marchwood must rely on Spartans to slip up for them to overtake them.

Curbridge continued their hold on second place in Junior 6 with a 2-1 win over second from bottom AFC Bishopstoke Reserves.

Liam Slade and Glenn Littleboy grabbed the Curbridge pair whilst Bishopstoke replied through Lewis Hutchings.





# -- PARK SCRATCHINGS -- PARK SCRATCHINGS --

## SOLENT SAINTS

**ADAM BROOME** (keeper): People always say you have to be nuts to be a goalkeeper and Broome definitely has that attribute. Often found deliberately trying to wind up the rest of his team in the changing rooms by throwing footballs.

**JONI MARSDEN** (right back): Well known for tough tackling approach. The only two goals he has ever scored for the team have both been slide tackles.

**ROB TAYLOR** (right back): Mr Utility has already filled in at three position this season, but never puts a foot wrong.

**TIM GROUNSELL** (right back): Big team moaner but, being the sole survivor in the squad from our first game of the team's history, has adapted well.

**CHRIS BOXX** (left back): Most dominant man in the air you can imagine and Mr Motivator at the back. Can always be head shouting "get my ball back".

**CRAIG NOSWORTHY** (defender): Team captain and a massive reason behind the strong defence last season. Able to pop up with very important goals through the year.

**NATHAN DALE** (centre back): New signing has been a breath of fresh air. So calm at the heart of the defence another lad who will rarely lose or misplace a header.

**JAMES SHIPP** (right midfield): Shippy – the unfortunate Pompey fan – is another new signing adjusting to team's game like a duck to water.

**SAM CHAPMAN** (centre midfield): The beast in midfield is a specimen, so physically fit and strong he can ride so many tackles and burst of pace can be uncatchable.

**MATT HEMSTEAD** (centre midfield): The other main player that has been with the club since it started. Even after he has graduated, still attempts to come down as many weeks as possible from London for games. Massive player for the side currently picking up a goal a game.

**DANIEL TO** (centre midfield): First year student at Solent has slotted in well into midfield, another lad so hard to get the ball off.

**TAMAKA MANDIMIKA** (centre midfield): Has a great engine and work ethic. Another new signing that looks to help take us far.

**JOSH 'SALLY' ROGERS** (left midfield): Only been with us two weeks but is settling in well. A fresher at Solent this year, his skill and pace on the wing is something we have been missing.

**DAVE FINNIGAN** (left midfield): Another Mr Consistent having played a major part in cup success last season getting four goals in the quarter-finals. As good as Rickie Lambert's on penalties.

**TAMLYN GOODRICH** (striker): Absolute work horse – pressurises other teams and helps to create so many chances. His partnership with his best mate Miki works wonders.

**MIKI DENNAHY** (striker): Very similar to Tam in work rate and his pace enables him to create havoc. One memorable Miki moment is his attempt to swing on the cross bar in the final ended up preventing a Tamlyn Goodrich opener.

## Meet the Manager

**Adam Betteridge**

**Age:** 24

**From:** South West London  
**Occupation:** Customer service representative at Nationwide Building Society

**Position:** Secretary, treasurer, manager and utility player

**Supports:** Manchester United  
**Favourite player:** David Beckham

**Best moment:** Last year, seeing a team made up completely of students winning the double and being awarded club of the season by the football league.

**Ambitions:** To win senior league this year.



# GRAINS: THE



**ON THE BALL:** Solent's Dan To.

Order no: 18264951

## AFC Grains are the invincibles.

The name given to Arsenal in 2003/04 and originally Preston North End in the 1880s after they went a complete league season unbeaten can now apply to the Southampton side.

They completed their impressive season by claiming the Drew Smith Senior 1 title following a 1-1 draw with fellow title challengers Solent Saints in the biggest game in the club's history.

Grains needed a point to secure the championship, while Saints required a win to take them top.

And it ended up being Grains' day as they finished the season with 14 wins, two draws and zero defeats after Oli Adams gave them the lead before Craig Nosworthy's leveller.

Indeed, this game may not have reflected the impressive form both teams have showed throughout the season.

With so much at risk it came as little surprise that they played out a nervy, sometimes scrappy, draw at Wide Lane.

On his last game before retiring, Grains centre-back Dave Butler could have destroyed any hopes of finishing his career on a major high as he saw an attempted clearance with his head hit his own post with the score 0-0.

Despite that wobbly start, Butler pulled off a man-of-the-match performance to ensure his career ended with the most famous win in the club's six seasons in existence.

It was another one of the founding



**ATTACK:** Ade Mills on the ball for Grains.  
Order no: 18264956

fathers of the club, Oli Adams, that notched the all in important first with half-an-hour played in the first-half.

Josh Ramsey's cross picked out Adams's brother Alex, who nodded the ball to his sibling. He controlled with his chest and picked his spot perfectly, slotting past the outstretched arm of 'keeper Adam Broome.

That lead was kept for a matter of ten minutes as a Saints free-kick,

swung in from 45-yards, forcing Grains stopper Gav Bailey into action.

As the ball looped over the defence the keeper came out to collect but he failed in his attempt and the ball ended up on a plate for Nosworthy to head home and level the match.

After the restart clear-cut chances for either side were hard to come by and it was in moments of nerve-shredding action that Solent looked



**SOLENT SAINTS:** Back row: Josh Scully-Rogers, Dave Finnigan, Tim Groomsell, Rob Taylor, Jon Mosden, Jack Taylor, Nath Dale, Adam Betteridge. Front Row: Pat Blott, Tam Goodrich, Adam Broome, Sam Chapman, Dan To, Tamaka Mandimika.

Order no: 18264904

## DO YOU WANT TO BE FEATURED IN PARK SCRATCHINGS?



# -- PARK SCRATCHINGS -- PARK SCRATCHINGS --

# INVINCIBLES

## AFC GRAINS

**Local pub:** Two Brothers  
**Skipper:** Oli Adams  
**Biggest moaner:** Alex Adams, never does a game go past when this kid does not find something to moan about. Once talked himself in to a red card when we were winning 8-2!  
**Mr Motivator:** Dave Butler. Always positive and encouraging  
**Worst Car:** Dan Chalke – Clapped out Corsa. When he eventually tries scrapping it the dealer will demand he pays them to take it.

**ALEX ADAMS** (all rounder): Can play anywhere, loves playing. Alone in a room would still manage an argument.

**OLI ADAMS** (striker): Club captain, fantastic talent – but as tight with passing the ball as he is paying subs.

**GAV BAILEY** (goalkeeper): Vice captain, most experienced player in the team at 44, but still thinks that he is a spring chicken. Great attitude and a pleasure to manage.

**TOM BIGGS** (striker): Joker of the group, never fails to make anyone laugh. Technically superb.

**DAVID 'BOOMERANG' BUTLER** (defender): One of the more experienced members. Lost count of how many times he has left the club thinking the grass is greener.

**DAN CHALKE** (defender): By far the best attitude in the whole club, even though he runs the line every week. Great defender.

**LIAM COOKE** (midfield): New this season. Amazing all round midfielder, full of energy and aggression, going to accumulate the club discipline points this season.

**TOM FURLONGER** (defender): Manager's golden boy. Loves football so much it runs his life. Strong defender – rarely puts a foot wrong unless it's his left one.

**DAVE GRAY** (defender) Club pro whose team talks take 15 minutes too long. Big character and signed with a big reputation. Can play anywhere along the back 4.

**SIMON GRAY** (midfielder): AKA cave-man. Calm player, this season finally showing his true potential. Scored a few goals.

**TOM GRAY** (midfielder): If he was any more laid back he would be horizontal. Technically one of the best in the team, also a very good right-back.

**DAN HARKETT-BURGESS** (all rounder): Fantastic signing, outstanding when fully fit. Not happy unless kicking someone.

## Meet the Manager

**Joe Grassick**

**Age:** 27

**From:** Swaythling

**Occupation:** Chef

**Supports:** Liverpool

**Favourite player:** Xabi Alonso

**Best moment:** Winning Junior A cup

**Best goal:** Tom Biggs thunderbolt

**v East Boldre**

**Ambitions:** League title



**CHANCE:** Goalmouth action from the clash between AFC Grains and Solent Saints. Order no: 18264966

the more likely. This title, arguably, was won in November.

In the first league fixture between these two Senior 1 stalwarts Grains won 3-1, Solent's only loss of the season. And since that day it could be said that the trophy had already been engraved.

But it was the heartbreak of three seasons' ago, which saw Grains miss out on the title on the final day of the season, that kept them going through this match. It was even

used as motivation in the stirring team-talk prior to the match by manager Joe Grassick.

So when, in the final throws of the match, Solent went looking for a vital winner Grains stayed resolute and strong in defence.

Injured centre-back and long term member of the Grains squad, Luke Osman was proud of his teammates defending.

"It was a nervy, a tight game," he said. "That disrupted the match

and made it scrappy. But we defended like Trojans, the boys pretty much crawled off the pitch at the end of the game that's how hard it was for them out there.

"The last kick of the match, which was a Solent corner, saw their goalkeeper come up for one last try, but our keeper Gav Bailey bravely came out and held the ball.

"He doesn't usually do that sort of thing, but at that crucial moment he pulled it off."



**TOUCH:** Grains' Ben Keens. Order no: 18264945



**AFC GRAINS:** Back Row: Liam Osman, Oli Adams, Tom Furlonger, Gav Bailey, Dave Butler, Dan Burgess, Tom Gray. Front row: Gregg Parker, Alex Adams, Josh Ramsay, Liam Cooke, Ade Mills, Dave Gray, Ben Keens.

Order no: 18264928

**EMAIL** [peter.howard@dailyecho.co.uk](mailto:peter.howard@dailyecho.co.uk)



# NEW FOREST INFANT SCHOOLS FOOTBALL FESTIVAL



**GIVING IT SOME WELLY:** Action from Lymington B (white strip) v Western Downland. Order no: 18253027



**THE New Forest Infant Schools Football Festival goes from strength to strength, this year's entry of 19 teams almost double that of 2013.**

Hosted by Foxhills Infant School, Ashurst, 19 boys and ten girls teams took part, **writes OLLIE MASKELL.**

The event was organised by Rob Crocker, who said: "The day went really well and we'll definitely be holding it again 2015."

#### RESULTS

**Boys:** 1) Lydlynch Infant School, 2) Calmore Infant School, 3) Cadland Primary School.  
**Girls:** 1) Brokenhurst Primary School, 2) Hordle Church of England Primary School, 3) Cadland Primary School.



**Daily Echo**  
dailyecho.co.uk  
C A M P A I G N

**GOAL!** Lydlynch (red bibs) score against Fawley.

Order no: 18257568



**FAWLEY**

Order no: 18251275



**ON THE RUN:** Action from Lymington B (white strip) v Western Downland.

Order no: 18253022



**HORDLE**

Order no: 18251177



**BROCKENHURST**

Order no: 18251212



# NEW FOREST INFANT SCHOOLS FOOTBALL FESTIVAL



LYDLYNCH

Daily Echo pictures by Chris Moorhouse Order no: 18257547



WESTERN DOWNLAND A

Order no: 18251096



FOXHILLS A

Order no: 18257535



LYMINGTON A

Order no: 18253014



LYMINGTON B

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# Youth Football

## Brock clean up in Bath

BROCKENHURST College Football Academy won the British Colleges National seven-a-side tournament at Bath University, sweeping to victory in nine of their ten matches.

The tournament embraced all the regional winners from across the country, together with teams from Wales and Scotland.

The Brock students enjoyed a goal bonanza, beating Ayrshire 7-1, Lancaster & Morecombe 6-1, Hartlepool 3-0, North Port Talbot 4-1, Birmingham Met 2-0, Barking & Dagenham 4-0, Bishops Burton 5-0 and Lincoln 5-1.

Their solitary defeat was inflicted by East Norfolk, whose 3-1 win made them runners-up.

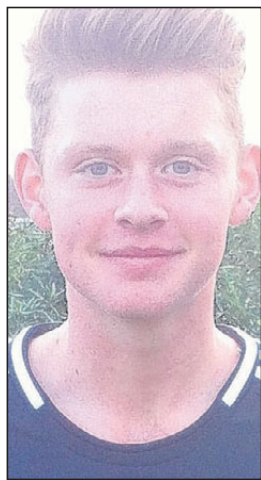
An additional bonus was the return to action of Adam Drodge, who broke his leg earlier in the season.

Jack Hoey was the man of the tournament, scoring 18 goals.



**BROCKENHURST COLLEGE FOOTBALL ACADEMY:** Back row (from left): George Wheeler, Jack Hoey, Pat O'Flaherty, Connor Doe, Adam Drodge. Front: Connor Cullingford, Jack Dickson, Harry Morgan.

## JAKE WINS PRO DEAL



**JAKE BURGESS**

**WHITEPARISH'S** Jake Burgess beat almost 6,000 aspiring footballers to a one-year contract with Leyton Orient after winning the Samsung Win A Pro Contract competition.

The 16-year-old made it through a series of selection processes and an 11-a-side final to join forces with the League One high-fliers, who are managed by Russell Slade, writes **MIKE VIMPANY**.

After the final, Burgess was one of two players to be invited to intense boot-camp training with the Orient first team squad, where he got the life-changing call.

"It's an absolute dream come true to become a pro-

fessional footballer," the Salisbury City academy player said.

"I got straight on the phone to my grandparents to tell them the news and they were really excited for me.

"I can't wait to get started at Orient now, all of the players and staff are great and I'm really looking forward to working hard for them in the future.

"For now, I'm going to be dedicating my time to working on my fitness in the gym and playing as much football as possible, before joining the squad where the real work starts."

Burgess will now look to join the Orient squad in the next few months, before signing his professional contract in June.

## Hounslow chasing county glory

FOUR local sides are through to upcoming Hampshire Schools' FA Cup finals.

First up are Hounslow's successful Year 8 group, who face Andover's Harrow Way in the county under-13 final at

Southampton Solent University's Test Park on Friday week, April 25, 5pm.

On May 7, St George's face a cross-county trek to Surrey University's complex to face Salesian College in the under-14 final.

Salesian are also finalists at under-15 level but face a stiff task against Wildern (see separate story) at Woking's Kingsmead Stadium on May 12.

Wildern's under-12s play Milton Cross (Portsmouth)

in the under-11 Hampshire final on a date and venue yet to be decided.

Swanmore, 2-1 semi-final winners over Testwood last week, also await details of their under-16 final against Robert May's, from Odiham.



**WILDERN UNDER-12s:** Back row (from left): Josh Wilkins, James Thurston, Luke Pardoe (captain), Travis McDonald-Coak, Will Hammerton, Jacobb Grigg, Michael Ellison. Front: Ali Nixon, Jack Renshaw, Grace Jenman, Josh Dedman, Elliott Lewis, Brad Logan, Oli Cutcliffe, Will Paterson.

## Wildern's double vision

GOAL happy Wildern want to win the Hampshire Schools' FA Under-12 final against Milton Cross – to make up for the disappointment of being beaten in the Southampton Cup semi-finals.

A 3-2 defeat by Redbridge – who will face Bitterne Park

in the city final – is the only blemish on an otherwise superb Wildern playing record this winter.

So far, they've scored 58 goals in 12 matches – and bagged the Southampton League title with a 100 per cent record.

They rounded off their

league programme in style with a 9-1 win over USH.

"It's their first year together and the team have done themselves and the school proud in their accomplishments so far. To reach the Hampshire Cup final is fantastic for them," beamed coach Russell Grant.



**WILDERN UNDER-15s:** Back row (from left): Jono Blake, Guy Seward, Hayden Foster, Ryan Gregory, Ben Lucas, Bleu Jones, Will Gange, Matt Gabbott. Front: Joe Reeves, Jason Moulder, Harry Gibbs, Mackenzie Dellimore, Will Rowe, Luke Mockford, Matt Brewer.

## On track for the treble

WILDERN under-15s have their eyes set on a trophy treble, with just Upper Shirley and Bitterne Park left to play.

But it's two cup finals – against Bitterne Park and Salesian College – that loom large on the horizon after the Easter holidays.

They've beaten St George's 8-2, Redbridge 3-1 and

hopes of lifting the championship, with just Upper Shirley and Bitterne Park left to play.

But it's two cup finals – against Bitterne Park and Salesian College – that loom large on the horizon after the Easter holidays.

They've beaten St George's 8-2, Redbridge 3-1 and

Testwood 4-0 to reach the Southampton Cup final, while in the Hampshire Under-15 Cup they've enjoyed success against Bitterne Park 1-0, Mountbatten 3-2, Lord Nelson 4-1 and Priory 3-2.

The cup final against Salesian College is at Woking's Kingsmead Stadium on Monday, May 12.

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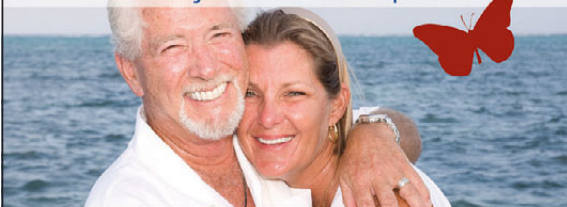
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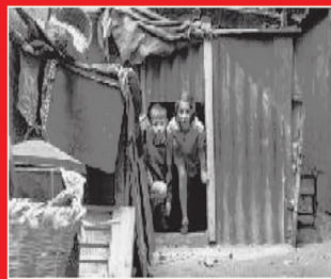
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## QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"I am naturally very disappointed to have lost my job but immensely proud to have served as Norwich City's manager. I understand the recent frustrations, but I remained totally confident that we were on course to create history at the club by retaining our top-flight status and move into a fourth consecutive season in the Barclays Premier League" - **Hughton responds to his sacking via an LMA statement.**

"He's on an IV drip, he has drains in his shoulder. He's a sick puppy, but at the end of the day he's not critical. He's not in intensive care. Like all these things, the doctors and nurses in Australia are good and it's bad luck that he got this and he's fighting it like he always has. He will get better quickly I'm sure" - **Ian Thorpe's spokesman James Erskine plays down fears after the five-time Olympic gold medallist contracted an infection in his shoulder following surgery.**

"He smashed his shoulder. I don't know exactly what parts of shoulder he broke, but all I can tell you is I have seen the X-rays and the plates and the pins that are in there - he looks like the bionic man. He can hardly get out of bed to have a piddle. The answer is 'no he's not going to be back to competitive swimming'. He's not going to be in the Commonwealth Games and he's not thinking about returning for the next Olympics" - **Erskine again, ruling out any prospect of Thorpe making a competitive comeback.**



**SENIOR SPORTSMAN:** Nicholas Percy.



**JUNIOR SPORTSMAN:** Brad Taylor.



**JUNIOR SPORTSPERSON:** Alice Tai.



**JUNIOR VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:** Alice Weaving.

She travelled to Holland to race at the European Age Group Championships for Duathlon and took the overall title with ease.

India will represent GB at the World Aquathlon Championships in Hyde Park this September.

### JUNIOR SPORTSMAN

**Brad Taylor (Cricket, East Hampshire)**

Taylor last year became the youngest player since 1867 to play for Hampshire's first team.

He made his debut in a one-day game against Lancashire, taking 2-50 in a 40-over contest. Taylor broke a 146-year-old record as the youngest player to take a wicket for the county in a competitive match when he dismissed Stephen Moore with only his third delivery.

He then took four second innings wickets on his Championship debut against the same opponents at Southport.

**Also nominated**

**Milo Gill-Taylor (Sailing, New Forest)**

The Spinnaker Sailing Club (Ringwood) member enjoyed a superb 2013. He claimed a bronze in the Optimist World Team Racing Championships, as well as winning the Irish and Belgian National Championships. Gill-Taylor was the youngest ever sailor to qualify for an Optimist Worlds Team at the age of 11.

**Ali Rogers (Triathlon, New Forest)**

The triathlete was voted Brockenhurst College's Sport & Fitness

student of the Year for 2013.

He has progressed from grass-roots to European Junior Champion in just two years having previously played hockey for New Milton and Brockenhurst College Hockey Academy.

In 2013 he won the 16-19 years age-group European Championships in Turkey.

Last summer he swam the Channel as part of the Brockenhurst College swim team and was the highest individual fundraiser of all Channel swimmers, raising nearly £6,000.

**Continued on page 40**



"I told him that he needed to calm down and he was putting too much pressure on himself. Contrary to popular belief, I have a very good relationship with most of the guys in the English dressing room. I like to look after them. If someone is struggling, I like to go up and put an arm around him" - **axed England batsman Kevin Pietersen, above, claims he tried to help Jonathan Trott after first noticing the problems that forced his early Ashes departure.**

"It's not good. Everyone's playing for their future in my opinion. Of course I'm under pressure - results suggest that. I'm not in a strong position now because of the results we've had over a period of time. I met him before the game. We just talked about football, he's not looking to give me any assurances - I wouldn't expect any" - **Brian McDermott expects his position as Leeds manager to come under scrutiny after a 3-0 loss at Watford - his side's eighth Sky Bet Championship defeat in nine outings and played out in the presence of new owner Massimo Cellino.**

"Leeds is potentially a Ferrari, now it's a Cinquecento. I want to transform Leeds from Highway to Hell to Stairway to Heaven. You are not going to be bored with me" - **Cellino himself.**

**MORE SPORTS NEWS ONLINE: WWW.DAILYECHO.CO.UK**



## FOOTBALL FIXTURES FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday, April 14

### SKY BET FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Championship: Reading v Leicester.  
SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE  
South: Havant & Waterlooville v Bishops Cleeve.

### WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Division One West: Team Solent v East Cowes Vics.

Tuesday, April 15

### BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Arsenal v West Ham.

### SKY BET FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Championship: Charlton v Barnsley.  
League 1: Crawley Town v Tranmere.

### SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

Premier: Braintree Town v Gateshead, Grimsby v FC Halifax, Kidderminster v Cambridge Utd, Macclesfield v Forest Green.

South: Concord v Ebbsfleet, Dorchester v Hayes & Yeading, Eastleigh v Dover, Gosport Borough v Basingstoke, Staines v Tonbridge Angels.

### CALOR SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Biggleswade v Truro, Hungerford v Bashley, Poole Town v Hitchin, Weymouth v Banbury.

Division One South & West: Bishops Cleeve v Bridgwater, Shortwood v Godalming, Taunton v Merthyr Town, Tiverton v Cinderford.

### SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: AFC Portchester v Sholing, Brockenhurst v Whitechurch, Fareham v Fawley, Hordean v Hamworthy Utd, Moneyfields v Alesford.

Division One: Andover New Street v Laverstock & Ford, US Portsmouth v Petersfield.

### ISLE OF WIGHT GOLD CUP

Semi-final: West Wight v East Cowes Vics.

### PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: Colden Common v Baffins Milton Rovers, Fleetlands v Otterbourne, Liss Athletic v QK Southampton, Locks Heath v AFC Aldermaston.

Division One: Infinity v Upham.

Combination Division: Michelmersh & Timsbury v Hedge End Rangers.

Wednesday, April 16

### BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Everton v Crystal Palace, Man City v Sunderland.

### UNDER-18 INTERNATIONAL

England U18 v Germany U18.

### CALOR SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Corby v Redditch.

### SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Christchurch v Lymington Town.

Division One: Amesbury v Team Solent.

### SOUTHAMPTON SENIOR CUP FINAL

Hedge End Rangers v Sholing Res (Southampton FC, 7.30).

### PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: Winchester Castle v Bournemouth Sports.

### WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Wyvern Shield, Knock-out quarter-final: Petersfield Town v Locks Heath.

Division One West: Christchurch v Ringwood, Laverstock & Ford v Romsey Town.

Thursday, April 17

### SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

South: Hayes & Yeading v Gosport Borough.

### CALOR SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Hungerford v Chippenham, Poole Town v Chesham.

Division One South & West: Bishops Cleeve v Paulton Rovers, Stratford v Tiverton.

### SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Fareham Town v Sholing.

### ALDERSHOT SENIOR CUP

Semi-final: Reading Town v Alesford Town.

### PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: Clanfield v AFC Aldermaston, QK Southampton v Colden Common.

Division One: Upham v Hamble Club.

Combination: Hedge End Rangers v Paulsgrove.

### WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Moneyfields v New Milton Town.

# Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sports Awards 2014 AWARD WINNERS'

Continued from page 39

## Junior Sportswoman

**Kierra Barker (athletics, Basingstoke)**

The 16-year-old Basingstoke and Mid Hants Athletics Club member won the U18 World School Games High Jump title last year.

She was also third in the 100m Hurdles in the same tournament. Barker was the English Schools U17 High Champion in 2013.

Also nominated

**Danielle Harrison (athletics, Basingstoke)**

Has been selected to compete as part of the four-strong Great Britain Senior Performance squad.

During 2013, aged just 13, Daniell should have been skating at Novice Level, but instead competed at both Junior (aged 19 & under) and Senior (all ages) levels.

At the end of 2013 she was ranked top GB Junior (19 yrs and under), 4th GB Senior (all ages), and first in the GB Advanced Novice (15 & under) section.

**Laura Rafferty (football, Southampton)**

Has captained the Chelsea Ladies reserve side and played a handful of games for the club's first team in the Women's Super League.

Rafferty captained the Hampshire FA Girls Centre Of Excellence to their first championship title in 2012/13.

Last November she made her debut for the senior Northern Ireland Women's squad that competed in the Senior World Cup qualifiers.

## SERVICE TO SPORT

**Dennis Blazye (Badminton, East Hampshire)**

Dennis has been involved with badminton as a player, a coach and an administrator for over 60 years – 10 of them in Australia, where he reached State level.

As an administrator he has organised local coaches, setting up and running coach education programmes and seminars.

He led Hampshire Badminton's part in liaising with the English Sports Council (now Sport England), Hampshire County Council, architects and Westgate School authorities over the six and a half years it took to get the Westgate Badminton Performance and Development Centre an international standard 5-court hall.

Also nominated

**Gordon Osborne MBE (Swimming/Life Saving, IOW)**

Osborne's swimming career started in the 1950s when he won the Island Schools 100 yards.

He helped found Ryde Inshore Rescue in 1956, and remained secretary until 2013.

Osborne taught swimming and life-saving from the early 1960s to the late 1990s.

With Brading Haven Yacht Club, he



**AWARDS:** Senior Team Award winners Portsmouth Team Gym and, top,

raced dinghies, taught sailing to young members and has held every position on the committee over a 50 year period.

He was an early member of Isle of Wight Marlins Swim Club in the 1990s and treasurer and chairman for 10 years, and organiser of the annual Sandown-Shanklin sea swim.

**Brian Donegan (Gymnastics, Basingstoke)**

Brian has completed 31 years of almost continuous volunteering in a variety of roles at Basingstoke Gymnastics Club.

## JUNIOR DISABILITY SPORTSPERSON

Alice Tai (swimming, New Forest)

The 14-year-old set a new British record for 100m backstroke in March last year (short course).

She went on to smash this record last November and set a new European record for this event. Since November, Tai has set new British and European records in the following longcourse events – 50m back, 100m back and 200m back.

Tai won Bronze at the British International Disability Championships (50 Free) in April 2013.

Also nominated

Katy Kemish (Boccia, New Forest)

She won the U19 Visually Impaired Boccia National Championships aged just 15.

In the last two years, the 16-year-old

has helped deliver Boccia to a variety of pupils aged between five and 16 with differing needs at the annual Paralympic Day at Toynbee.

She also helps lead the Boccia club at Toynbee School, is heavily involved in the School Council, has achieved her senior green belt in Judo, and has helped create a DVD for the Youth Sports Trust.

**Gregg Baxter (Wheelchair Football, East Hampshire)**

## SENIOR DISABILITY SPORTSPERSON

Tyler Christopher (Sledge Hockey, Test Valley)

A member of the Sledge Hockey GB

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# Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sports Awards 2014

## MAGICAL NIGHT...



**MASTERS SPORTSPERSON:** Lindsey Andrews.



**JUNIOR TEAM AWARD:** Elliott Wells and Jake Todd.

side, Tyler suffered devastating injuries, including the loss of his legs, in Afghanistan in 2009 while serving with 4 Rifles in Helmand Province.

Through the Help for Heroes programme, Battle Back, a sport and adventure training scheme, Tyler is well on his way to his Paralympic dream.

#### Also nominated

**Patrick Wilson (Boccia, East Hampshire)**

The 18-year-old Treloar Boccia squad member was selected for the fast track GB talent squad. Won a silver medal at an international School Games event in Brazil.

**Melanie Jewett (running,**

#### Eastleigh

The Eastleigh Running Club member, 42, represented Great Britain for the first time at the Deaflympics in Sofia. She competed in both the marathon, where she won bronze, and the 10,000m.

She ran a personal best time of 3:23:54 in the marathon, breaking the GB games record by an incredible 10 minutes.

She improved her marathon best time in the Bournemouth Marathon, clocking 3:22:28.

#### MASTERS SPORTSMAN

**Lindsey Andrews (Karate, Basingstoke)**

The 39-year-old, a member of the Shin Gi Tai Martial Arts Academy, won a

host of events in Karate in 2013. She is currently ranked No 1 in the UK for Ladies Veterans Kata, No 1 for Ladies Senior Shotokan Kata, and No 1 for Ladies Veterans Kata (teams of 3).

#### Also nominated

**Gordon Mitchell (Kick Boxing, Test Valley)**

The Andover man is the head coach at Fighting Falcons Kickboxing and in 2013 won a gold medal at the WPKA World Championships. He was also US Open Champion, WAKO British Champion and ISKA British Champion.

**Mark Nevola (Karate, Basingstoke)**

The 50-year-old, another member of



**SENIOR DISABILITY AWARD:** Katie Christopher accepts the award on behalf of husband Tyler (inset).



**PARTICIPATION COACH:** Andrea Merritt.

the Shin Gi Tai Martial Arts Academy in Essex, also won a host of national and international awards.

#### OUTSTANDING PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**Natasha Lambert (sailing, IoW)**

The 16-year-old has athetoid cerebral palsy but still sailed her boat, Miss Isle, the 28 miles from Boulogne to Dover last November. She was duly named the Yachting Journalist Association's Young Sailor of the Year for 2013.

Her adventures have raised tens of thousands of pounds for other charities including the RNLI, Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust and Wetwheels.

*Continued on page 42*

#### FOOTBALL FIXTURES FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Friday, April 18

##### SKY BET FOOTBALL LEAGUE

**Championship:** Blackburn v Yeovil, Blackpool v Burnley, Bournemouth v Sheff Wed, Charlton v Bolton, Doncaster v Derby, Huddersfield v Brighton, Wigan v Reading.

**League 1:** Bradford v Peterborough, Brentford v Preston, Carlisle v Walsall, Colchester v Oldham, Coventry v Swindon, Crawley Town v Leyton Orient, Gillingham v Tranmere, Port Vale v Milton Keynes Dons, Sheff Utd v Stevenage, Shrewsbury v Crewe, Wolverhampton v Rotherham, Bristol City v Notts County.

**League 2:** AFC Wimbledon v Newport County, Accrington Stanley v Mansfield, Bury v Plymouth, Cheltenham v Fleetwood Town, Chesterfield v Exeter, Morecambe v Scunthorpe, Oxford Utd v York, Rochdale v Southend, Torquay v Dag & Red, Wycombe v Northampton.

**SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE**  
**Premier:** Aldershot v Salisbury, Alfreton Town v Grimsby, Braintree Town v Dartford, Gateshead v Southport, Hyde v Kidderminster, Lincoln City v Cambridge Utd, Tamworth v Hereford.

**South:** Eastleigh v Basingstoke (3pm), Ebbsfleet v Eastbourne Borough (3pm), Weston-super-Mare v Havant & Waterlooville (7.45pm).

Saturday, April 19

(FL games 3pm unless stated)

##### BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Aston Villa v SAINTS, Cardiff v Stoke, Hull v Arsenal (5.30pm), Newcastle v Swansea, Spurs v Fulham (12.45pm), West Ham v Crystal Palace.

##### SKY BET FOOTBALL LEAGUE

**Championship:** Barnsley v Leeds, Leicester v QPR (12.15pm), Middlesbrough v Millwall, Nottm Forest v Birmingham, Watford v Ipswich.

**League 2:** Burton Albion v Hartlepool, Portsmouth v Bristol Rovers.

**SKRILL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE**  
**Premier:** Chester FC v Wrexham, FC Halifax v Macclesfield, Forest Green v Woking, Nuneaton v Barnet, Welling v Luton.

**South:** Bishops Cleeve v Sutton, Concord v Dover, Farnborough v Maidenhead, Gosport Borough v Bath City, Hayes & Yeading v Boreham Wood, Staines v Chelmsford, Tonbridge Angels v Bromley, Whitehawk v Dorchester.

##### CALOR SOUTHERN LEAGUE

**Premier Division:** AFC Totton v Bedford, Banbury v St Albans, Biggleswade v Bideford, Chesham v Stourbridge, Corby v Arlesley, Frome v Burnham, Hitchin v Chippenham, Hungerford v H.

**Division One South & West:** Bridgwater v Fleet Town, Cinderford v Wimborne, Evesham v Paulton Rovers, Godalming v Stratford, Mangotsfield v Cirencester, North Leigh v Clevedon, Shortwood v Bishops Cleeve, Swindon Supermarine v Merthyr Town, Thatcham v Taunton, Tiverton v Guildford City, Yate v Didcot.

##### SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

**Premier Division:** AFC Portchester v Alesford, Bemerton HH v Newport IoW, Blackfield & Langley v Hamworthy Utd, Christchurch v Horndean, Fareham Town v Bournemouth Poppies, Fawley AFC v Whitchurch Utd, Sholing v Verwood.

**Division One:** Amesbury v Cowes Sports, Andover Town v Petersfield, East Cowes Vics v Andover NS, Laverstock & Ford v Fleet Spurs, Pewsey Vale v Hayling Utd, Team Solent v Ringwood, US Portsmouth v Tadley Calvea.

##### PUMA ENGINEERING HPL

**Premier Division:** AFC Stoneham v Locks Heath, Colden Common v Bournemouth Sports, Headley Utd v QK Southampton, Hedge End Rangers v Otterbourne, Liphook v Fleetlands, Liss Athletic v AFC Aldermaston, Overton v Baffins Milton Rovers, Paulsgrove v Winchester Castle.

**Division One:** Bush Hill v Infinity, Hamble Club v Andover Lions, Michelmersh & Timsbury v Broughton.

**Combination:** Clanfield v Liss, Fleetlands v AFC Stoneham, Michelmersh & Timsbury v Overton, Otterbourne v Winchester Castle.

##### WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

**Premier Division:** Moneyfields v Sholing.

**Division One East:** Alesford v Petersfield, Folland Sports v Alton, Locks Heath v US Portsmouth, Newport IoW v Horndean.

**Division One West:** Romsey v Team Solent, Verwood v Laverstock & Ford.

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## BOOK of the WEEK

**SALT. SWEAT. TEARS**  
THE MEN WHO ROWED THE OCEANS  
By Adam Rackley

Sports book of the month price: £12.72 saving 33% on rrp

I SUSPECT that at some point in the long, glorious history of outrageous sporting and physical challenges, drink has played a part, either by inspiring participants, providing them with essential Dutch courage, or consummating the arrangements over a handshake.

It was no different for Adam Rackley who, initially with three other aspiring Atlantic rowers, confirmed and then celebrated their intentions accompanied by copious quantities of port before facing the inevitable, hung-over consequences.

Incredibly, ten times more people have climbed Everest than rowed an ocean. In fact, so few people have done it that there's ample space towards the rear of this enjoyable tome for a complete, up-to-date list, provided by the Ocean Rowing Society, detailing the names, craft and success (or otherwise) of those brave enough to attempt it.

The story of ocean rowing, and Salt. Sweat. Tears, starts in June 1896 when two Norwegian émigrés, George Harbo and Frank Samuelsen, set out from New York en route to the Scilly Isles in search of fame and fortune. The 55-day record this pair established in tackling the Atlantic stood for 114 years.

The attempt made by Adam Rackley and Jimmy Arnold began with a round-robin, matter-of-fact email distributed in December 2006 by Rackley to people he felt might be up for the challenge. So nonchalant is the document's wording, readers may feel he's inviting a few mates to the pub, a feature we must attribute to the confidence of youth. The pair eventually set sail in early 2010.

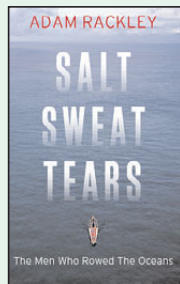
Their progress is charted in alternate, single-word chapters, starting, as all voyages of such magnitude must, with 'Hope'. Interspersed with our author's engaging tale are stories of the world's greatest ocean rowers, a clever technique which adds pace to the narrative. Rackley maintains that the greatest challenge while at sea was not necessarily physical, but mental. He and Arnold could adapt to sleep deprivation and rowing for 12 hours a day, but mental toughness became an essential attribute. Without giving the game away, it's interesting to note what Rackley did next, but don't be surprised to see his name on a starting sheet ready to tackle the Pacific.

We've teamed up with Sports Book of the Month & have a copy of **SALT. SWEAT. TEARS** to give away.

To win this week's sports book, go to their website ([www.sports-bookofthemoth.com](http://www.sports-bookofthemoth.com)) and answer the following question:

In what year was the first successful attempt to row across the Pacific Ocean completed?

a) 1899 b) 1972 c) 2004



# Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sports Awards 2014

## AWARD WINNERS'

From page 41

Also nominated

**Rachel Hessom (triathlon, Basingstoke)**

The 29-year-old competes for Overton Harriers running club and Basingstoke Bluefins swimming club, and in triathlons.

Last year she became the 12th person to complete the Arch to Arc Challenge, a triathlon from Marble Arch in London to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. Her overall time was 167h7m for the challenge, of which four days was due to a weather delay in Dover.

**Ella Richardson (swimming, New Forest)**

The 10-year-old, who is blind and autistic, has been having swimming lessons at Applemore for two years.

During these two years she has gone from a complete non-swimmer to being able to swim 25m on her front and back. Her goal was to swim in deep water and be safe, which she has achieved.

### JUNIOR TEAM

**Elliott Wells & Jake Todd (sailing, Havant)**

The Hayling Island Sailing Club pair won a gold medal in the RS Feva Euromed Championships in Malta, before taking silver in the World Championships.

Due to their success in winning the National Championships, the boys were invited to compete in the prestigious Endeavour Trophy the Champion of Champions regatta, mainly against adults.

Elliott and Jake, the youngest pairing in the event, finished 11th against 26 other pairings.

Also nominated

**Sholing U11 (football, Southampton)**

Sholing under-11s won seven different tournaments in 2013m and also won an Arsenal International Soccer Tournament. The team have been together since they were eight.

**Bentley Girls Cricket (Cricket, East Hampshire)**

### SENIOR TEAM OF THE YEAR

**Portsmouth School of Gymnastics' Senior Women (gymnastics, Portsmouth)**

They retained their British Championship title with a convincing win in the finals held in Bracknell.

Also nominated

**Alton Social Bowls Club Ladies Pairs (bowls, East Hampshire)**

In 2013 Brenda Plumpton was a member of a bowls triple from Alton Social that won the County Championship and represented Hampshire at the National Finals at Leamington Spa.

Rosemary Corney became the Hampshire 2-Wood singles champion in 2013 and also represented



**CLUB OF THE YEAR:** Poseidon Boxing Club.



**SENIOR VOLUNTEER:** Koo Janzen.

Hampshire at the National Finals.

**Aldershot, Farnham & District Ladies Middle Distance squad**

### PARTICIPATION COACH

**Andrea Merritt (Swimming, Basingstoke)**

The 46-year-old, who coaches Basingstoke Bluefins and Dove House School, takes five sessions per week, plus Sunday sessions.

Also nominated

**Emma West (Gymnastics, Southampton)**

The 31-year-old is a Level 3 Gymnastics coach at the Treasure club. She is the lead coach for both

preschool and adult programmes.

**Barry Alldrick (Swimming, New Forest)**

The 34-year-old has been Seagulls Swimming Club coach for the past nine years.

Barry also runs the Aqua swim school, teaching swimming to babies and young children, and also runs district school galas.

### PERFORMANCE COACH

**Anne Bidmead (Gymnastics, Basingstoke)**

The 61-year-old Basingstoke Gymnastics Club coach has 33 years of coaching experience.

She has gained qualifications in six gymnastic disciplines, which is almost

unheard of in the world of gymnastics – most coaches only hold qualifications in two or three disciplines.

This makes Anne one of the most qualified coaches in the country.

Also nominated

**Bryan Andrews (Martial Arts, Basingstoke)**

The 46-year-old coaches Karate, Judo, Kung Fu, Ju Jitsu, MMA and Tai Chi at the Shin Gi Tai Martial Arts Academy.

His competition squad won 247 medals at national or international events in 2013, compared to 74 in 2012.

In 2013 he helped coach 23 National champions in either Karate or Kung Fu.

**THE PINK AND DAILY ECHO: BEST FOR COMMUNITY SPORT NEWS**



# Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sports Awards 2014

## MAGICAL NIGHT...

### Sports Quiz

- 1 What is the surname which connects West Ham midfielder Mark and former Great Britain rugby league coach Brian?
- 2 What is the most important piece on a chess board?
- 3 By what name was former American heavyweight boxer Tommy Morrison known?
- 4 The Doonhamers is the nickname of which Scottish Championship club?
- 5 What is the surname of 36-year-old South African batsman Ashwell?
- 6 Tony Rea coaches which Super League side?
- 7 Ronnie O'Sullivan won the first of his world titles in which year?
- 8 How many World Cups have the England women's cricket side won?
- 9 Colin Cooper is the manager of which side?
- 10 Who won the 2011 women's Wimbledon championship?
- 11 Who was the last European player to win golf's Masters tournament?
- 12 At which club did former Norwich boss Chris Hughton finish his playing career in 1993?
- 13 Which two teams contested the 2013 Aviva Premiership final at Twickenham?
- 14 In which year was Finland's Keke Rosberg crowned Formula One world champion?
- 15 Ding Junhui won his fifth ranking snooker title of the season in China at the weekend to equal a 23-year-old record held by which player?
- 16 Joe Sayers recently retired as a cricketer from which county?
- 17 Which horse won the 2008 Grand National?
- 18 Name the two Football League clubs Dean Saunders has managed.
- 19 Which woman won the 2001 Wimbledon singles?
- 20 Adrian Morley plays for which Super League club?
- 21 Who are the only South African team to have won the Super Rugby title?
- 22 How many Test centuries has England batsman Joe Root scored?
- 23 In what year were Liverpool last crowned league champions?
- 24 How many Americans are in the top 50 of the ATP tennis rankings?
- 25 Which country has produced the most major champions in golf after the United States?



LONDON 2012 LEGACY AWARD: Winchester Goalball Club



PERFORMANCE COACH: Anne Bidmead.

#### Julian Such (Gymnastics, Portsmouth)

The 64-year-old has been coaching gymnastics with Portsmouth School of Gymnastics for over 30 years.

#### CLUB OF THE YEAR

##### Poseidon Boxing Juniors

A brand new club, Poseidon BC opened at the Ageas Bowl in March 2013 and now boasts over 350 members – approximately half of whom are junior participants.

Poseidon welcome referrals from the local constabulary, social and youth workers.

##### Also nominated

Basingstoke Gymnastics Club

#### OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR

##### Peter Darts (Athletics, Havant)

Peter qualified as an Athletics Field Judge in 1999.

In 2007 he was appointed to the National Field Judges list, thereby covering national and international meetings. Darts, 57, was selected to officiate at the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

##### Also nominated

Pete Bennett (Netball, Eastleigh) Organises the umpiring commitments for Eastleigh's Swan Centre netball club as well as training the club umpires. He also undertakes a similar task for the local league and for Hampshire Junior League.

##### Dillon Hoddle (Hockey, Havant)

The 16-year-old was selected to umpire at an HIPAC (High Performance Assessment Centre) event. He was then picked to umpire at an England Hockey Board Junior Regional Performance Centre.

#### LONDON 2012 LEGACY AWARD

##### Winchester Goalball Club

As a local Paralympian and GB star of the goalball Paralympics team, Adam Knott decided to bring his sport to Winchester. He created Winchester Goalball Club after developing numerous partnerships with local organisations such as Peter Symonds College, the local Rotary Club and Winchester

City Council.

##### Also nominated

##### Eastleigh Games 2012 Legacy Group

Games makers from Eastleigh and surrounding areas within Hampshire independently came together to form the Eastleigh Games 2012 Legacy Group.

Their enthusiasm and efficiency has been significant in organising and delivering the Eastleigh Community Games 2013 event.

##### Solent Sharks Wheelchair Rugby Club

In 2011, as part of the New Forest Local Hero scheme, the NF District Council was promoting Olympic/Paralympic athletes such as Aaron Phipps and looking to inspire people to get involved in sports.

As part of the Sportivate scheme, sessions were set up at Totton Leisure Centre and ran for 10 weeks.

#### JUNIOR VOLUNTEER

##### Alice Weaving (Football, Basingstoke)

Currently a student at Queen Mary's College where she acts as vice-chair of the QMC Student Management Team. Specifically oversees the development of football at the college.

##### Also nominated

##### Ffion Eade (Netball, Eastleigh)

The 16-year-old has transformed netball provision in Toynbee School and feeder school Fryern Junior.

Fryern had never previously entered the School Games Netball, but last year they entered three teams and Eade coached them all.

##### Wallis Canning (athletics, IOW)

Every Monday club night, Wallis helps run sessions for other athletes before her own training. She is also a core member of the volunteer team that runs the Parkrun event on the Isle of Wight on Saturday mornings.

#### SENIOR VOLUNTEER

##### Koo Janzen (Hockey, IOW)

Koo took on the role of chairman of the Hampshire Hockey Association Schools and Youth in 2009. Last year he organised the Hampshire Junior Academy Centre activity for girls and boys, u13 to u17 age groups.

##### Also nominated

##### Lynn Brastock (Running, Basingstoke)

The 52-year-old was a helper at the inaugural Basingstoke Parkrun event, which attracted just 37 runners.

Five years on, she is now the Basingstoke Parkrun Event Director.

##### David Old (Football, Test Valley)

The 74-year-old is now in his 60th year of helping out Braishfield FC. He maintains and cleans the club pavilion, prepares the changing rooms and prepares refreshments for players and spectators on match days.

MORE SPORT NEWS ONLINE: [WWW.DAILYECHO.CO.UK](http://WWW.DAILYECHO.CO.UK)

Answers: 1 Noble; 2 King; 3 The Duke; 4 Scotland. Two; 23 1990; 24 One (John Isner); 25 Williams; 20 Salford; 21 The Bulls; 22 19 Doncaster and Wolves; 19 Venus; 16 Yorkshire; 17 Comely or Die; 14 1982; 15 Stephen Hendry; 13 Leicester and 12 Brentford; 11 Jose Maria Olazabal (1999); 8 Three; 9 Harlepool; 10 Petra Kvitová; 7 Queen of the South; 5 Prince; 6 London; 2001; 3 The Duke; 4



# Hampshire Cricket Spotlight



## HAMPSHIRE FIXTURES

### April

6 Worcestershire (CC) ....Ageas Bowl  
Hampshire 263 (Ervine 93, Adams 67) and 27-1  
drew with Worcestershire 350-7 (Coles 3-58)  
13 Gloucestershire (CC) .....Bristol  
20 Derbyshire (CC) .....Derby  
27 Surrey (CC) .....Ageas Bowl

### May

5 Cardiff MCCU (Uni) ....Ageas Bowl  
11 Glamorgan (CC) ....Ageas Bowl  
16 Glamorgan (T20) ....Ageas Bowl  
18 Leicestershire (CC) .....Leicester  
23 Sussex (T20) .....Hove  
25 Middlesex (T20) .....Northwood  
30 Essex (T20) .....Ageas Bowl

### June

1 Derbyshire (CC) ....Ageas Bowl  
5 Kent (T20) .....Ageas Bowl  
8 Worcestershire (T20) ....New Road  
13 Somerset (T20) .....Taunton  
15 Essex (CC) .....Ageas Bowl  
20 Gloucs (T20) .....Ageas Bowl  
25 Glamorgan (T20) .....Cardiff  
27 Surrey (T20) .....Oval  
28 Surrey (CC) .....Oval

### July

4 Kent (T20) .....Canterbury  
6 Somerset (T20) .....Ageas Bowl  
7 Gloucs (CC) .....Ageas Bowl  
11 Middlesex (T20) .....Ageas Bowl  
13 Essex (CC) .....Colchester  
18 Sussex (T20) .....Ageas Bowl  
22 Essex (T20) .....Chelmsford  
26 Derbyshire (RLC) .....Derby  
27 Lancashire (RLC) ....Old Trafford  
31 Gloucs (RLC) .....Bristol

### August

6 Leicestershire (RLC) ....Ageas Bowl  
8 Northants (RLC) .....Ageas Bowl  
11 Worcs (RLC) .....Ageas Bowl  
13 Essex (RLC) .....Chelmsford  
14 Sri Lanka A (Tour) ....Ageas Bowl  
15 Kent (CC) .....Canterbury  
21 Yorkshire (RLC) .....Ageas Bowl  
31 Leicestershire (CC) ....Ageas Bowl

### September

15 Kent (CC) .....Ageas Bowl  
23 Glamorgan (CC) .....Cardiff

Key: CC = county championship. T20 = NatWest T20 Blast. RLC = Royal London Cup (50 overs).

# ABBOTT: MY AWESOME

## Kyle grateful for Hants chance

**IT IS hoped that Kyle Abbott's career goes in a different direction to that of Friedel de Wet after his season with Hampshire.**

Like De Wet three years ago, Abbot has arrived at The Ageas Bowl in the prime of his career with two Test caps to his name. De Wet, pictured below, was 30 and had taken six wickets at 31 against England, including 4-55 on his Test debut, a year earlier.

A back injury forced him to retire two years ago, with a very respectable first-class record of 229 wickets at just 25 apiece.

But it did not work out for him at The Ageas Bowl.

In four LV County Championship matches (against Durham, Notts, Somerset and Sussex in division one) he took a disappointing nine wickets at 52.

The season was only a month old when he played his last game for Hampshire and he never played for South Africa again.

At this stage of Abbott's career, the similarities are uncanny with that of De Wet's in April 2011.



Abbott also starred on his Test debut a year ago, taking 7-29 against Pakistan, and is on the fringes of the Proteas side with two caps to his name.

At 26, he also has

no shortage of experience.

But Abbott has a better all-round record than De Wet, with bat as well as ball (187 first-class wickets at 21.7). He has also played twice for his country in all three formats.

It is another Test recall that he covets more than anything and does not need reminding that South Africa tour England in 2017, when he should be enjoying the best years of his career.

"I'm getting towards my peak so exposing myself to different conditions around the world and playing as much cricket as I can to grow in experience is key," he said.

"It's an awesome opportunity to grow as a player. South Africa are coming here in a few years' time so hopefully I'll get used to the conditions.

"It's been a tough year, being on the fringes



**'With a new team, new conditions and a new ball it's going to be a great experience'**

## Simon Walter

simon.walter@dailyecho.co.uk

CRICKET REPORTER



and replacing injured players in the [South Africa] squad.

"There's a pecking order, which has been quite tough, but you just have to hang in there and keep knocking on the door.

"I was lucky enough to get another opportunity against Australia recently and hopefully I won't have to wait another year for my next one.

"There are always opportunities, it's just a case of being ready for them. What South Africa choose to go for now in terms of bowling combinations is out of my hands, but I like to feel I'm the next taxi in line."

Abbott makes his Hampshire debut in the Championship against Gloucestershire at Bristol tomorrow (Sunday), 20 miles inland from Clevedon CC, where he played in the West Of England Premier League in his late teens.

"I was lucky enough to play club cricket over here and a lot of people have said county cricket's an awesome experience, so having this opportunity is pretty cool," he continued.

"It's something I've wanted to do and now I'm just excited to get going.

"This will bring different challenges to at home, where I'm pretty accomplished and experienced.

"With a new team, new conditions and a new ball – the Duke's going to be a bit different [to the Kookaburra] – it's going to be a great experience.

"I've always tried to take myself out of my

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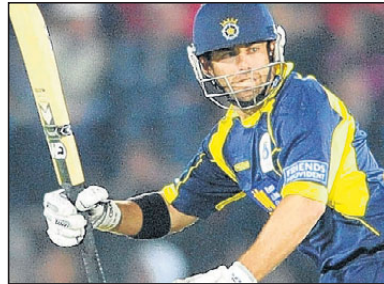


# Hampshire Cricket Spotlight

## OPPORTUNITY



**TEST CASE:** Kyle Abbott hopes to use his time at Hampshire to push for a recall to the South Africa Test side.



**INFLUENCE:** Neil McKenzie.

"It was more Neil McKenzie who had an influence on me coming here. The first thing he mentioned was the bar between the changing rooms that he tended to gravitate towards."

Abbott will certainly have earned a pint of ale if he bowls Hampshire to regular victories at The Ageas Bowl, where Hampshire have drawn six of their last nine games following this week's stalemate.

"Test wickets are incredibly difficult so putting in hard yards and working hard for wickets should become second nature," he said.

"I'd also like to get involved with the bowlers here, passing on little tips I've learned along the way."

Abbott's availability will become clearer when South Africa name their squads for tours of Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe in July/August.

He will definitely miss the last two Championship games after helping the Dolphins qualify for the T20 Champions League.

Hampshire are confident he will not go on the A tour to Australia in July and that the South Africa selectors will decide he is better off learning in English conditions than travelling to Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

But that is yet to be confirmed. "There's a series in Sri Lanka in July and a one-off Test in Zimbabwe in August [plus seven one-day internationals against Zimbabwe and Australia] so if I get selected I'll probably be here three-and-a-half months and if not till the end of August," said Abbott.

"I feel like I owe Hampshire a lot and need to give back to them when I can because they've been accommodating in releasing me and kind enough to sign me even though those obstacles are in the way."

**'The first thing he mentioned was the bar between the changing rooms'**

comfort zone. I think players perform at their best when they have new challenges and that's exactly how I see this, in a professional set-up in conditions I haven't played a lot of competitive cricket in."

Abbott has already played under Hampshire's new first-team coach, Dale Benkenstein, for the Sunfoil Dolphins.

Together they won South Africa's domestic T20 tournament, the Ram Slam Challenge, recently.

But Abbott was the first of the two to sign for Hampshire.

"Dale was our batting consultant so it's nice to already know someone here," he said, shortly after meeting some of his teammates during the LV County Championship draw against Worcestershire this week.

"On the day I signed, Dale and I went for a run together and he asked me where I was with it all. When I said I'd signed he said he was in talks with Hampshire!"

## RORY DEAL KO'D BY INJURY

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE'S hopes of signing former Hampshire player Rory Kleinveldt have been scuppered by injury.

Northants, promoted last season to Division One of the LV= County Championship, are therefore thwarted for a second time in their bid to bring a new overseas player to Wantage Road.

Their initial choice was Australian seamer Jackson Bird. Then after he pulled out injured, they announced this week they were set instead to sign South Africa all-rounder Kleinveldt.

But in a short press release, the club confirmed on Friday that the 31-year-old all-rounder is no longer available.

It read: "Rory Kleinveldt was this morning withdrawn from his contract by Cricket South Africa after a knee injury had been diagnosed by their medical team."

"Rory was due to arrive in the UK on Wednesday, and the late decision by Cricket South Africa is extremely disappointing."

"Northants will continue in their search to bring an overseas player to the club for the 2014 season."

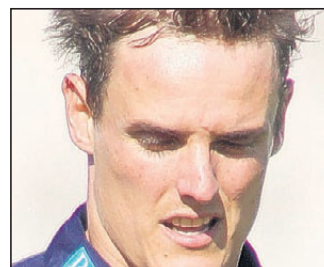
Kleinveldt struggled for fitness during his time with Hampshire in 2008, playing one LV County Championship match that summer.

## GRIFFITHS LEFT OUT

DAVID Griffiths has been left out of Kent's squad for their first LV County Championship match of the season.

The former Hampshire bowler, below, made his 'first-class' debut for Kent against Loughborough UCCU last week, taking 2-89.

But he will have to wait to make his Championship bow for his second county as Mitch Claydon, Australian Doug Bollinger, Robbie Joseph and 20-year-old Charlie Hartley are ahead of him in the pecking order.



## Did You Know?

THE Dafabet Snooker World Championship begins at the Crucible on Saturday, April 19.

Here the *Sports Pink* looks at some world championship facts and figures.

- The fastest 147 maximum break in snooker history came at the World Championship and was achieved by Ronnie O'Sullivan in 1997. O'Sullivan, below, made his perfect clearance in just five minutes and 20 seconds, against Mick Price. Price, who was making his third Crucible appearance, never qualified for another World Championship, but the frequent replays of that frame during television coverage means he has an established place in the tournament's history.



- There have been ten 147 maximum breaks in the televised stages of the World Championship. Two players have made three of those each, with Stephen Hendry and O'Sullivan the men responsible. Hendry made the most recent on day one of the 2012 tournament.

- Scottish players have won 12 of the last 24 World Championship titles, with Hendry claiming seven (1990-92-93-94-95-96-99), John Higgins four (1998-2007-2009-2011) and Graeme Dott one (2006).

- Derbyshire player Joe Davis was the first world champion in 1927 and won all 15 editions of the tournament he entered. His last title came in 1946 when he retired unbeaten from the World Championship but kept playing in other tournaments.

- The first event, staged in Birmingham, offered prize money of £6 10s.

- Only two players entered the 1931 World Championship. Tom Dennis, in whose pub the event was staged, lost 25-21 to Joe Davis.

- Fred Davis, who won eight world titles, reached the 1978 semi-finals at the age of 64. His brother, the great Joe Davis, sadly collapsed while watching the match and died two months later.

- The youngest world champion was Hendry in 1990. The Scot, pictured left, was just 21 when he beat Jimmy White 18-12.

- In 2005 Shaun Murphy became the first player to come through qualifying and win the world title. Judd Trump almost matched him in 2011 but lost out to John Higgins in the final.

- A British television audience of 18.5million watched Dennis Taylor beat Steve Davis on the final black in the 1985 final. Viewing figures in China for Ding Junhui's matches routinely dwarf that figure.

- Jimmy White, pictured below, Walter Donaldson and Fred Davis have each lost six finals – a record. White, unlike Donaldson and Davis, has never been a world champion.

- There has been only one whitewash in a match at the World Championship. It came in the first round in 1992, when 62-year-old Australian Eddie Charlton was beaten 10-0 by defending champion John Parrott.

- The Crucible Theatre has a maximum seating capacity of 980.

- O'Sullivan lifted the so-called 'Crucible Curse' when defending his title last year. It made him the first player to stage a successful defence since Hendry won his five in a row from 1992 to 1996.

- Ken Doherty is the only player to have won the amateur and professional world titles, registering his win in the unpaid ranks in 1989 before pocketing £210,000 for triumphing at the Crucible in 1997.



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